



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

*Some
Latter-day
Religions*

Combs

University of Virginia Library

BL:98;.C6;1899

ALD

Some latter-day religions,



NX 000 527 258

Jm.

LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA



FROM THE LIBRARY OF
WILLIAM JACKSON MORTON, D. D.

Sep. 1905

SOME LATTER-DAY RELIGIONS

BY
GEORGE HAMILTON COMBS



UNIVERSITY
OF VIRGINIA

CHICAGO NEW YORK TORONTO
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY
1899

517
MAR 4 1902

BL
98
.C6
1899
268431

COPYRIGHT, 1899
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

VTT030V1011
A1030V 70

FOREWORD

These essays lay no claim to fullness and exhaustiveness of theme treatments. They are but modest attempts to counteract in some slight degree the baneful effects of the Athenian itching for new things. Cast in part for platform uses, no attempt has been made to alter the oral form. As for the references and quotations in this volume, they are, in the main, first-hand and may be verified.

G. H. C.

TO MY WIFE

CONTENTS

	PAGE
I ÆSTHETICISM 	11
II THEOSOPHY 	29
III OTHERISM 	49
IV FAITH CURE 	69
V PESSIMISM 	91
VI PESSIMISM (CONTINUED) . . .	111
VII AGNOSTICISM 	129
VIII MATERIALISM 	147
IX SPIRITUALISM 	169
X LIBERALISM 	187
XI MORMONISM 	205
XII CHRISTIAN SCIENCE 	225 .
XIII SOCIALISM 	245

"Whenever a school of thought ceases to be constructive, in the true sense, creative; whenever it becomes predominantly negative, its influence is on the wane, its days are numbered. The world is a vast reality. Christianity is, as Goethe said, an infinite thing; and the multitudes of serious people will forever refuse to follow the men who lead nowhither, and who spend their force in reducing to a poor minimum the significance of our human universe."

"The Christ of To-Day," Gordon, p. 146.

"No amount of progress, no advance in civilization, no addition of extraneous materials can of themselves hasten the coming of the Kingdom. The first step must be not a learning, but an unlearning; not an onward development, but a backward march. What is wanted above all things, and before all things, is a new beginning—an entrance for the second time into the stage of birth, the resuming of life in the form of a little child."

"Messages of the Old Religions," Matheson, p. 78.

"Always and everywhere salvation is torture, deliverance means death, and peace lies in sacrifice. Life is a series of agonies, a Calvary, which we can only climb on bruised and aching knees. We seek distractions, we wander away, we deafen and stupefy ourselves that we may escape the test; we turn away our eyes from the via dolorosa, and yet there is no help for it; we must come back to it in the end."

"The Journal Intime," Amiel, Vol. I, p. 158.

I

ÆSTHETICISM

Mr. Matthew Arnold is the founder of a religion which by and by will get itself dubbed Æstheticism.

The personality of the creator of this cult is unique. It were easy to criticise Mr. Arnold's assumptions. It is quite evident that he overrated altogether the importance of his contributions to theologic thought, and that as a maker of verse rather than as a philosopher his name will live. In questionable taste is much of the matter and the manner of his controversial work. For one who was not inaptly referred to as "the prophet of the kid-glove persuasion," "a fanciful, finnikin Oxonian," to rail out against his social betters, to make sport of the solid middle class, and worst of all, to crack jests over the Trinity, is not altogether in severest taste. "Bantering the Trinity is not yet a recognized British pastime"—at least one would hope not.

Mr. Arnold certainly had no fear of that which Emerson terms "the hobgoblin of little minds"—consistency. He repeats over and over his stale

joke on the plurality of persons in the Godhead, and yet exhibits a plurality of persons in himself. One moment he tells us that Christianity is doomed. "Miracles must go." Popular Christianity, such as is represented by Moody and Sankey, Mr. Arnold declares is believed only by the stupid middle class, with "its bounded horizons." In the preface to "Literature and Dogma" he says: "Our mechanical and materializing theology, with its insane license of affirmation about God, its insane license about a future state, is really the result of the poverty and inanition of our minds." In his "Last Essays" he informs us that orthodox Christians in this country "do not know how decisively the whole force of progressive and liberal opinion on the Continent has pronounced against the Christian religion. They do not know how surely the whole force of progressive and liberal opinion in this country tends to follow, so far as traditional religion is concerned, the opinion of the Continent. They dream of patching that which is unmendable, of retaining what can never be retained, of stopping change at a point where it can never be stopped." Christianity must go. And yet this same iconoclast furiously assaults Professor Clifford for saying in impetuous, militant way what he himself has said, though in words less vigorous; brands his utterances as "merely the crackling fireworks of youthful paradox," the "declamation of a clever and

confident youth, with the hopeless inexperience irredeemable by any cleverness of his age." Mr. Arnold cracks jokes over the Trinity, and yet when Mr. Clifford speaks of "the grotesque forms of its (Christianity's) intellectual beliefs," he indignantly declares that Professor Clifford is but a young and headstrong youth, standing by the Sea of Time, "who, instead of listening to the solemn and rhythmical beat of its waves, chooses to fill the air with his own whoopings to start the echoes." And strange to say, this religion which is to go, is not to depart after all. Christianity will still appeal to men. "Men will return to the Bible, just as a man who tried to give up food, thinking it was a vain thing and he could do without it, would return to food; or a man who tried to give up sleep, thinking it was a vain thing and he could do without it, would return to sleep."

But though Mr. Arnold sometimes holds to this latter view, in general he voices the belief that all the gods are dead, all altars overthrown, all faith in the divine perished from the earth, and that it is his to bring into the deserted Pantheon a new and abiding worship, the worship of Culture.

And what of this new worship? What is culture? Narrowly, "To know the best that has been thought and said in the world." "Culture is reading." More broadly, the harmonious development of our humanity, freedom from narrowness and prejudice,

breadth of thought, expansive sympathies, catholic feelings, high and unselfish ideals of life. Mr. Arnold's programme, as stated by Principal Shairp, makes culture and religion run in parallel lines.

First, in that culture places perfection not in any external good, but in an internal condition of the soul—The kingdom of God is within you.

Secondly, in that it sets before men a condition, not of having and resting, but of growing and becoming, as the true aim—"forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before."

Thirdly, in that it holds that a man's perfection cannot be self-contained, but must embrace the good of others equally with his own, and as the very condition of his own.—"Look not any man on his own things only, but every man also on the things of others."

Fourthly—and here Mr. Arnold thinks culture forges ahead of religion—"as an harmonious expansion of *all* the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature, culture goes beyond religion, as religion is generally conceived among us." Truly, if culture can give us so high an ideal of life, and can drive us ever on toward its realization, it is to be reckoned with, and seriously.

It will occur to the investigator to inquire as to the origin of this ideal. Is it not distinctly Christian in its genesis? Would not Mr. Arnold's

acquaintance with Scripture, of whose thoroughness his disciples are wont to boast, be quite sufficient to explain the materials of his dream, the doctrine that perfection is to be sought not in any external good, but in the condition of the soul, and that this perfection is not self-contained, but must embrace the good of others? Is it not the child of Christianity, and is not our critic but preaching to us an old sermon, though tricked out in modern garb? This ideal is a Christian ideal, and one would have expected of Mr. Arnold a clearer acknowledgment of his debt to the Christ than he has chosen to make. Such conduct might be looked for in "barbarians," but one would not expect our academician to so trip in the necessary "three-fourths." The language of the Bible may be, as he finely tells us, "fluid, passing, and literary, not rigid, fixed, and scientific," but the language of honesty *is* fixed, and not fluid and passing; and being fixed and rigid, Mr. Arnold should have learned it and dared to speak it. To praise the Bible and the Christ in a general way is not enough. Mr. Arnold should state that the very foundation stones of his temple æsthetic are from the Christian quarry, and that a religion outgrown, as he tells us, on the Continent, and even in England, save by the bourgeoisie, with "their bounded horizon," has yet given to him his ideal of conduct, and even the very shibboleths of his culture religion.

But passing all that, we are led to believe that one of the primary and colossal mistakes made by our prophet is his underestimate of the sinfulness of the human heart, the exceeding power of sin. To him sin is not an appalling, malignant thing, a deadly cancer eating at the very vitals of humanity, a grim enemy of Titanic strength with which humanity wrestles in awful way, but only a weakness to be outgrown, "a soft infirmity of the blood," a necessary stage in human progress, a cloud obscuring for the moment the brightness of the sun. For Paul and his doctrine of sin he has slight respect. Augustinianism repels him. Mr. Arnold in his estimate of sin is Hellenistic rather than Hebraic. Holding sin thus lightly, he speaks ever in optimistic way of its cure. He knows nothing of that great word "salvation," only of reformation and perfection.

Human nature as it is, to his thinking, needs no radical change. No influx of a divine spirit, no exorcism of evil, no implantation of a high life, but only natural and easy-going culture. Hence he falls into a mistake in his judgment of religion. "The final aim of both Hellenism and Hebraism, as of all great spiritual disciplines, is no doubt the same: man's perfection or salvation." But perfection and salvation, dear man from Oxford, are not synonymous. That this underestimate of sin vitiates his philosophy is beyond question. "The

governing idea of Hellenism," he tells us, "is spontaneity of consciousness; that of Hebraism, strictness of conscience." And the Puritans, he says, are censurable in that they have made the secondary—strictness of conscience—principal at the wrong moment, and the principal—spontaneity of expression—they have at the wrong moment treated as secondary. As if strictness of conscience, goodness, righteousness ever could be secondary! Beyond all cavil is Mr. Arnold *not* a Puritan. Nor is he a reformer. But is he the stronger man for his lightsome mood? Would not a little more of the hatred of sin characterizing the Jewish prophets have added to Mr. Arnold's power? The world needs "good haters," haters of sin as well as lovers of "sweetness and light."

Mr. Arnold's system is faulty in this: Culture is considered as an end, as existing for its own sake. Now, many things make for culture, among which is religion. But religion for culture's sake is inconceivable. Says a critic: 'They who seek religion for culture's sake are æsthetic, not religious, and will never gain that grace which religion adds to culture, because they can never have the religion. To seek religion for the personal elevation, or even for the social improvement it brings, is really to fall from faith, which rests in God and the knowledge of Him as the ultimate good, and has no by-ends to serve.' And well does he add

that of two men, the one starting on the road of self-improvement from a mainly intellectual interest, from the love of art, science, literature, but with no sense of responsibility to a Higher Being than himself; the other beginning with a recognition of God, and from this center going on to add all the moral and mental improvement within his reach, feeling that in so doing he will also best serve Him who sent him—that there can be no doubt as to which is the nobler character of the two. Culture is not perfected, it is true, without religion, but religion for culture's sake is monstrous.

And, then, history supports the contention that heroic lives are never rooted in this impoverished culture soil. Great souls are not those that have concerned themselves about culture for their own elevation; or even for social advancement, but who the rather have ever lived and wrought under the impelling thought that they were the instruments of One who is higher than they and whose purposes it was theirs to fulfill. Culture as an end was to them unthinkable. The French peasant girl wrought mightily, because she heard, or thought she heard, angel voices bidding her leave her flock and peaceful peasant life to save the luckless king, to drive back the invading hosts. Napoleon spoke ever of his "star." Cromwell believed himself to be the instrument of God. Luther, Savon-rola, Wesley, these have all wrought under the

spell of a divine inspiration. Says Austin Phelps: "Reformers like Luther and Mahomet, statesmen like Sir Matthew Hale and the Duke de Choiseul, generals like Cromwell and Napoleon, philosophers like Socrates and Spinoza, painters like Fra Angelica, and sculptors like Danneker, heroes of adventure like Havelock and Gordon, all come upon common ground in this consciousness of having been chosen by a Power above the plane of their own being to a destiny of achievement planned by no wisdom of theirs in its origin, but of which they have been the executioners. Without this faith men do not climb to the summit of their faculties. To accomplish their mission on any masterly scale of enterprise men must find out on an equal scale of discovery that they have a mission." This is infinitely farther seeing than Mr. Arnold's. Men do not come to their highest for mere culture's sake, finding in that no supreme impelling force, but rise only to their full stature under the mighty consciousness of answering in their life-work a divine call. Men climb mountains not for the mere muscle culture of it, but drawn by the entrancing vision; they go forth to battle not to develop themselves, but obedient to the "voices in the air."

This new religion is no more successful in its practical workings than in its gossamer philosophies.

Mr. Arnold strove for the realization of the brotherhood of man. "No living man," says one of his

admirers, "is more deeply permeated with the grand doctrine of equality than was he." He would place Jack and Jill on a level with kings and queens. He would bind men together by a strong cord of brotherhood. In prophetic vision he saw:

"The ancient barriers disappear;
Down bow the mountains high;
The sea-divided shores draw near
In a world's unity."

It is a splendid dream, but what is the modus of its realization? On what common ground is a reconstructed humanity to meet? What shall be the foundations of the Temple of Brotherly Accord? What gospel can break all caste's barriers down and bring on the reign of equality? "Culture," says our Oxford don, "culture—the study of perfection." Is not our critic who takes himself so seriously as to set out to "reconstruct the Christ," to "reconstruct theology," guilty of most shallow thinking here? Does he not know that his ideal of culture is altogether impracticable, but a shimmering dream? Does he not know that it is essentially a patrician rather than a democratic ideal? Does he not know that the "sea-divided shores" are never "drawn near in a world's unity" to the sound of his high-pitched flute? This culture ideal of Mr. Arnold is as far off as the moon. It is possible of realization only to the elect few of each generation.

Is there any reasonable ground for supposing that this compound of "sweetness and light" will make for brotherhood? Is this preachment from earnest men or from a finicky dilettante class, loving lotus land more than the dusty fields of practical endeavor? Has this class ever wrested any Magna Charta from the worlds' tyrants? Has it ever redressed a grievance? Has it ever led a crusade? Wordsworth surely had the hopelessness of this culture in mind when he wrote:

"A few strong instincts and a few plain rules
Among the herdsmen of the Alps have wrought
More for mankind at this unhappy day
Than all the pride of intellect and thought."

Is it not a fact that culture without the mellowing influence of religion tends to make men exclusive, narrow, and unsocial? Culturists dream of an all-embracing brotherhood, but they have done nothing as yet toward its realization. As a means of social amelioration, social reconstruction, social democracy, nothing could be more futile, more inane. In the ante-Revolutionary days in France, when peasants were dying of hunger, culturists merely shrugged their shoulders and passed by—their brothers!

No saving word comes from these æsthetic coteries. A few oaken-hearted, simple-lived men, like Mr. Moody, Mr. Booth, Mr. Riis, have done a thousandfold more toward bringing on the mil-

lenium of fraternity than have all these apostles of "sweet reasonableness" since the world began.

If the question were driven home as to why these culturists fail, the answer would not be hard to find—they have missed the note of salvation. Renan, in his "Recollections and Letters," is discussing Amiel's doctrine of sin, also Amiel's criticism of his (Renan's) doctrine of sin. "He reproaches me forcibly for not taking sin sufficiently into account, and he asks himself, 'What does M. Renan do with sin?' As I said the other day in my native town, I really believe that I *suppress* it in fact." Like his great French model, Mr. Arnold suppresses sin, or if he fail to suppress it, grasps not its malignity and power and gives no word of deliverance. In the æsthetic vocabulary salvation and education are synonymous. Consequently the philosophy of salvation is shallow. Mr. Arnold holds that racial salvation will come through education, ignoring altogether the large part of the sacrificial in life. Salvation does not come as the culturist holds, by the elevation of self, but by the dying to self.

At times Mr. Arnold seems to catch a glimpse of this truth. In "God and the Bible" he speaks of the secret of Jesus—he that will save his life shall lose it, he that shall lose his life shall save it—as being of "universal application." In "Culture and Anarchy" he speaks of "Hebraism aiming

at self-conquest and rescue from the thrall of vile affections, not by obedience to the letter of the law, but by conformity to the image of a self-sacrificing example," and strongly adds, "through age after age, and generation after generation, our race, or at least that part which was most living and progressive, was baptized into a death." And yet he cannot see that this sacrificial principle is to thread all lives, that it is and ever will be humanity's only hope. This doctrine of sacrifice is not historic and archaic simply, but for all the days vital. In truth this doctrine which our essayist states and then lets alone, quite contented to have stated it is "of universal application," and only as it is inwrought into the race is there promise of social betterment. The individual must "be baptized into a death." He may not, with the culturist, seek his life, thus losing it; with the Christ the rather must he lose it, thus saving it forever. Calvary is the dramatization of this world-old truth. The way of salvation is not by the academy of the culturist, but by the Gethsemane and Golgotha of Jesus of Nazareth.

Æstheticism lacks power. The culturist may have given the world a very remarkable engine, but one item has been overlooked, and a most important item—steam. What will drive the engine? What power pushes the world on? Will education? On the contrary, Mr. Arnold, in

"Essays and Criticism," declares that "the mass of mankind can be carried along at full course of hardship, for the natural man, can be borne over the thousand impediments of the narrow way, *only by the tide of a joyful and bounding emotion.*" And again, "The noblest souls of whatever creed need a joyful emotion to make action perfect." And yet once more, "The paramount virtue of religion is, that it has lifted up morality, has supplied the inspiration, the emotion needful for carrying men along the narrow way." This same truth is also hinted in his famous definition of religion, "Morality touched by emotion." Now look at the culture programme and discover if you can the "joyful and bounding tide of emotion" by which man is to be borne over the "thousand impediments of the narrow way." What is there in the cold elegance of this classicism to suggest the emotion that is to make "moral action perfect." Dr. Parkhurst has somewhere said "that every thought and every deed that has a history began as a passion." But where is there room for a passion in this austere pagan temple?

But it may be said that Mr. Arnold does not banish religion and the emotions born of it, and that in religion we are to seek for power. In truth, it is very kind of our teacher to permit religion to remain in the world upon promise of good behavior, making no further insistence upon the supernat-

ural, withdrawing all its mighty pretensions, content to have a part in the culture programme of Mr. Matthew Arnold. It surely is proof conclusive of an amazing catholicity that our critic should consent that an emasculated Christianity, in no sense distinguishable from a growth of naturalism, should be suffered to remain in the new Pantheon. But what is there in the attenuated religion left us to call forth the mighty tide of emotions which bears men on so far? This literary fledgling—what can it do toward making moral actions perfect?

How sadly too the culturist fails in his sense of proportion, of the comparative values of things. Said Madame de Staël, "Religion is the one great concern of life." And yet our genial philosopher would, without thought of disproportion, drive all abreast—literature, philosophy, art, religion—before his culture car. Here is a gay Hellenism that lives not far from frivolity. We know that Mr. Arnold was no Puritan. He speaks commiseratingly of the world which "entered the prison of Puritanism and had the key turned upon its spirit there for two hundred years." He writes with unconcealed disgust of the "steady and respectable life which makes one shiver, its hideousness, its universal *ennui*;" but one cannot help thinking that the ethical force of Mr. Arnold's work would have been vastly greater had he possessed more of that religiousness which he gloried in despising, had he

known more of the serious world of the Puritan, and less of the sensuous sky of the Greek.

One wonders, too, why Mr. Arnold's full knowledge of the history of Greece did not reveal to him the powerlessness of his culture ideal. He would have us strive to realize Athenian ideals. Yet, as seen on the historian's page, how void those ideals of ethical power! Here, by the blue Mediterranean, æstheticism records its failures. Never did culture soar higher, never did man fall lower. Art was deified, man was degraded. Gods were made out of marbles, beasts out of men. Virtue was crushed beneath the wheels of beauty's car.

We may be pardoned a single glance at the author of this new religion and the question, "did he who chased that flying and illusive shadow, Rest, find it ever?" For answer comes the most plaintive voice of our day, and through "Obermann" and "Dover Beach" shivers a music haunted with the sorrow of all the world. The antique grace of a dead world is his, but also its unappeasable agony. The anguish is none the less real because it does not moan. Mr. Arnold's poems are chiseled despair.

"Now he is dead! Far hence he lies
In the lorn Syrian town,
And on his grave with shining eyes
The quiet stars look down."

The singer's eyes are dry, but the song is the "miserere" of a broken heart,

"The United States furnish the greatest market for intellectual *green fruit* of all the places in the world."

"Autocrat of Breakfast Table," Holmes, p. 261.

"One of the commonest of mediumistic manifestations is light. It is a poor "psychic" who cannot make a ball of fire or a phosphorescent hand appear in a dark room, and we have Prof. Crook's photographs to show the objective character of this light. Now if this radiant energy will decompose silver bromide on a sensitive plate why should it not decompose nitrocellulose in the magazine of a Spanish warship. Probably no single person would have sufficient force to project the psychic spark far enough, but a battery of mediums could be located on some prominent point, and connected so as to secure the greatest possible voltage.

"In the secret service department supernatural powers would be invaluable. An astral form should have been kept in Sagasta's Cabinet at all hours, and perhaps a similar watch at Paris and Berlin. All languages are alike to such messengers, so a knowledge of foreign tongues would be as unnecessary to them as to an American Minister at a European court. The projection of astral forms seems quite easy from the descriptions of the process. It is simply a kind of applied calculus, first differentiation into infinitesimals and integration at the required place. Telepathy is getting so dreadfully common nowadays that there ought to be no difficulty at all in finding out the plans of the enemy, provided he has any."

E. E. Slosson of University of Wyoming, in "The Independent."

II

THEOSOPHY

Dr. John Watson, preacher-novelist, speaking of Theosophy, declared that "it is another contribution to the innocent gayety of our times." It is more; it is a notable addition to present-day romancing. The Theosophist is a Jules Verne in the garb of the priest, and these his Bibles so fantastic, so bizarre, but other "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea." But this does not mean that sincere, thoughtful, and even learned men have not been found to rally round this new standard, nor that its contributions to the world are altogether worthless. Honest men, as well as those not so honest (and judged by the shady record of the Theosophical Society the latter seem to be in the majority) have espoused this cause, and upon some truths they proclaim there is needed insistence. Its positive contributions are these—an awakened interest in the study of comparative religions, new revelations of the occult powers of the human mind.

But what is Theosophy? The Standard dictionary says, "Mystical speculation applied to

deduce a philosophy of the universe; literally, wisdom concerning God." But so large a thing cannot be put into a definition, and for a knowledge of this system we must go to the writings of its advocates. Here there is not one voice, but many. No two Theosophists agree in even the elementals of the cult. In their far-reaching claims all of the sages of the past are claimed as Theosophists—Moses, Socrates, Plato, Confucius, Buddha—and the agreements between the modern representatives of this gospel are no more marked than among its more ancient apostles. We seek in vain for an authoritative expression of this ism. There is none.

This absence of an authoritative expression of beliefs, while a boast of the Theosophist, is somewhat puzzling to the reviewer. Of course, it is easy to find the systems outlined by its apostles, but the misfortune is that none of them agree even as to the essentials of the doctrine, and in representing the ism according to the one you run amuck the views of others. However, Sinnett, Madame Blavatsky, Judge, Olcott, and Colville may be taken as representative guides, and it is from their books that the quotations in this study are drawn.

The claims of this rehabilitated Orientalism will not die of modesty. In a pamphlet entitled "An Epitome of Theosophy," gotten out several years

ago with a view of popularizing this cult, we have the following: "Theosophy, the wisdom religion, has existed from immemorial time. It offers us a theory of nature and life which is founded upon knowledge acquired by the sages of the East, a knowledge not imagined or inferred, but seen and known." This knowledge, which we are bidden to remember, is not imagined or inferred, but "seen and known," besides being the only true doctrines concerning a hundred subjects which are treated of in the pamphlet, "is the only system" which gives a satisfactory solution of such problems as these:

1. The object, use, and inhabitation of other planets than this earth.
2. The geological cataclysms, the differences between the various races of men, the line of future development.
3. The contrasts and unisons of the world's faiths.
4. The existence of evil and of sorrow.
5. The inequalities of society.
6. The possession by individuals of psychic powers.

And much else besides. Surely an ambitious programme.

The inspiration of such a stupendous movement is the mahatmas—wise men of the East—adepts in the secret doctrine of this cult, who by laborious

self-discipline, through many incarnations, and with many degrees of initiation and preferment, have attained the heights of wisdom. These "brothers" all have seven senses; in addition to touch, taste, smell, sight, hearing, intuition, and thought transference. Through their inspiration the propaganda is professedly carried on. Madame Blavatsky claimed that her books were but the products of this inspiration.

Mrs. Emma Hardinge Britten, when in 1876, she published those extraordinary works, "Art Magic" and "Ghost-Land" declared that they were not written by herself, "but by one who knows." In this whole fantastic drama the mahatma plays a most conspicuous part. Reading all minds, passing by a mere wish in a moment's time from Hindoostan to New York, worn and beautiful with spiritual watchings, they are sufficiently spectacular to invite attention. Indeed, according to Colville, they invite rather too much attention. But the remonstrance of this, sanest of all advocates of Theosophy, is overborne by Sinnett, Judge, Olcott, Blavatsky, who glory in these soft-footed, silent adepts, and would not for any consideration be robbed of their weird, ghostlike presence.

The Theosophical Society is an association, formed in 1875, with three aims. First, to be the nucleus of a universal brotherhood. Second, to promote the study of Eastern literatures, religions,

and sciences. Third, to investigate the psychical powers latent in man. The first article of this creed is stressed, and adhesion to it only is a prerequisite to membership. "Theosophy," says Colville, "inculcates one dogma, and that is the universal brotherhood of man." That is a noble dogma, albeit a stolen one. This gospel of brotherliness was preached by the Nazarene. He it was who first proclaimed the kinship of all men, and in their laudations of Gautama, the shadowy one, and those teachings which are supposedly from his lips, would it not be well for these our friends to remember and to proclaim, that the very cornerstone of their temple came from him, whom, according to Colville, Theosophists frequently asperse? It is a borrowed creed, or failing to give credit to its author, then a stolen creed, with which Theosophy comes before us, and yet so noble is the creed, so much does the world need it, that if this were the only cry, this the only dogma forced upon us, we should bid this cult hail and Godspeed! But along with this come a thousand Eastern fantasies, some harmless, some amusing, some monstrous. Let us look a little closer.

Consider first the kinfolk of this new religion. On the other side of the sea, Buddhism, Brahmanism, Confucianism; on this side, Spiritualism and Christian Science. The ethics of Theosophy,

Madame Blavatsky informs us, are taken in the main from Buddhism. Its fantastic theories, too; its teachings concerning Karma, rebirth, the constitution of man, are also drawn from this source. Indeed, so heavily has Theosophy borrowed from Buddhism that Madame Blavatsky, in her "Key to Theosophy," feels called upon to combat the notion that the two systems are identical. So much as to its Eastern kin. As to its Occidental relations, Colville declares that "Theosophy and Spiritualism are essentially one and inseparable, and as to Christian Science and all allied systems of thought practice, they are but sectional extensions of one and the same root idea." Nearly all Theosophists are believers in the phenomena of Spiritualism. Madame Blavatsky and Olcott accept the phenomena with explanations. The "spirit," they say, the real ego, does not come back after death, but floating around in the universe are the yet undissolved substances, the "shells" of the departed, and these may be materialized. It ill becomes any Theosophist to doubt the revelations of any Spiritualist medium, even though it should be of such a radical as the Rev. Thomas Harris, founder of a Socialist community on Lake Erie, who declared that he had been married to a spirit, and that a child was born of this union, for modern Theosophy must always say, "Mother" to Spiritualism. Madame Blavatsky

was first a Spiritualist, a medium, and it was because of the exposures of mediums and the disrepute into which Spiritualism was falling that this remarkable woman was led to change her plan, and out of the materials of discredited Spiritualism build the more pretentious temple of Theosophy. Madame waves her hand, and lo! ghosts are changed into astral bodies, floating guitars into falling flowers, cabinet tricks into shrine revelations, mediums into chelas, and the "center of the spiritual world shifts from the séance room to the Thibetan Himalayas."

Another mark of Theosophy is its boasted eclecticism. It culls the flowers from all gardens, it is wont to tell us; drinks from all fountains, gazes upon all stars. Its basic assumption is the equal worth of all religions. "Let no man assert the exclusive sanctity or truthfulness of any religion. You can be a Theosophist and remain a Jew, a Christian, a Mohammedan." It is quite true that this eclecticism squints; that, boasting of its hospitality to all religions, it feels called upon to slur Christianity, declaring Vedic scriptures to be of far more worth than Hebrew Bible, but let that pass. This very eclecticism is vulnerable. To assert that all religions are equally true, equally valuable, is folly. You might just as well say that all sciences, all philosophies, are equally true. But this is absurd. To say that the views of the physical

heavens held a thousand years ago and the astronomical systems of to-day are equally true, is sheer idiocy.

Eclecticism in science is a failure. So in religion. Theories diametrically opposite cannot both be true. To show the absurdity of this grouping recall the spectacular burial service over the ashes of Baron Henry de Palm. One of the first converts to this cult, the baron very kindly left his body for cremation, and put the burial service in charge of the Theosophical Society. Here was a magnificent opportunity to give a spectacular exhibition of the eclecticism of this ism, so a Theosophist, Mr. Olcott, presided, a Spiritualist offered prayer, and a materialist read the burial service. Here is your Spiritualist, to whom the very air swarms with spirits, and here is your materialist, who hears only the sorrowful refrain "dust to dust," taking part in this exhibition of inconsistencies! Both cannot be right. If the one view is truth, the other is false as hell. A Christian cloak, an Egyptian sandal, a Mohammedan girdle, a Buddhist turban—this is not the garb of a philosopher, but the fantastic trappings of a clown.

Theosophy gives us an emasculated deity. Is Theosophy atheistic or pantheistic? Sometimes the one you are led to believe, sometimes the other. The Theosophist states that the Arhats call themselves atheists, and they are justified in

doing so if theism inculcates the existence of a conscious God governing the universe by His will power. Many of Madame Blavatsky's assertions imply at least practical atheism. In the "Key to Theosophy" Madame Blavatsky is asked, "Do you believe in God—the God of the Christian?" "In such a God we do not believe; we reject the idea of a personal extra cosmic and anthropomorphic God, who is but the gigantic shadow of man, and not of man at his best, either—this God is a bundle of contradictions and a logical impossibility." And again she says, "This 'God in secret' is not distinct from finite man." In "The Perfect Way" we read "God is nothing that man is not, and what man is that God is likewise." Says Judge, "Theosophy makes of man a God."

This is atheism in its baldest form. It is hardly necessary for Sinnett to say that such a conception of God "does not even remotely resemble that of the churches." Surely not. Bald, undisguised atheism! Yet on other pages of these books that never take the trouble to be consistent we meet with a pantheistic conception of God. For instance, in "The Key to Theosophy," Madame Blavatsky is told that it is urged against her teaching that God is everywhere, that if it be true God would be in the ash of a cigar, just as in the soul of man, and the high priestess says, "To be sure;

God is in the ash just as in my soul." Is it thumbs up or thumbs down? Is there no God, or is there a something, a principle that is everywhere? Sometimes the one and sometimes the other, according to this gospel. Call it "it" and pass on.

It cannot be denied that Theosophy has introduced us to some rather curious Eastern occultism in its doctrine of the constitution of man. In "Esoteric Buddhists" the doctrine of the sevenfold constitution of man is given us. This doctrine, if it may be apprehended by the Western mind and roughly set forth in illustrative way, is something like this: Man has seven layers of being, from the highest to the lowest, each expressing itself through the other. To begin there is "atma," or the ultimate unit of consciousness. This is expressed through the "spiritual soul," which is in turn expressed through the "intellectual soul," which is obligingly imaged in the "animal soul," which is expressed in the "astral body," which body is connected with the physical frame by the sixth principle, "vitality." Of these principles the "astral body" is particularly interesting. This body can be sent by the Mahatmas, the Brothers, as far as they wish, and Thibetan monks were wont to cross deserts and oceans in a single moment's time, and turn up in Madame Blavatsky's rooms in New York.

In comparison with the feats of the "astral

body" electricity is nowhere. Curiously enough, we all seem to have degenerated, for at the beginning of our existence on this planet, Judge in his "Echoes from the Orient" tells us, that all had astral bodies. The great animals of the early geologic ages, he is kind enough to say, in explanation, were so gross and absorbed so much matter that there wasn't any left for man; so he had to content himself with an astral body. But by and by, when the animals grew smaller and didn't absorb quite so much matter, man began to take it on increasingly, and at last, our author gravely tells us, was able to cast a shadow! Just how Mr. Judge and his compeers found all this out is not quite plain. But this does not exhaust their knowledge of astral bodies. The very air about us is full of cemeteries, we are told, in which these astral bodies are crumbling. For these astral bodies die, too, and in any out-of-the-way interstellar space you are apt to stumble on a graveyard where these ghosts are buried. It positively makes one creepy, and diminishes somewhat the interest in the trip we are planning to the moon. To have a balloon rush through these graveyards all unwittingly and be haunted by the ghost of a ghost—it's not to be thought of.

All of the mysteries of this astral world, however, are quite familiar to the Mahatmas. "The astral world penetrates the physical. If we see a

dog's footprint on the floor it is not necessary that we see a dog enter or leave the room to know that a dog has been there. On seeing a human footprint we can judge about how large the person is who made it. Similarly on the astral atmosphere every thought makes its impression; our thoughts and desires all leave prints on the astral sands of time." But lest we should conclude that this record was not intelligible, Mr. Colville relieves us by saying that the "seer can see these thought impressions as with our physical eyes we can track footprints across the snow." It is a huge library these Mahatmas have for their study, and if the astral world were not "full of cemeteries," it might be thought that their occupation would be a pleasant one.

But the marvels of this knowledge pale before the Theosophical revelations concerning incarnation. The Theosophist accepts without reservation the Eastern doctrine of rebirth, of the transmigration of the soul, holds that we are embodied repeatedly, that every soul has a plurality of terrestrial experiences. "Reëmbodiment," says Colville, "need not take place on the same planet; it is possible to live through the whole of one round on earth; thus, if one lives the life which may be called the rung A in the ladder of progression on this planet, he will live his B life on another world." But if he does not "progress," he is

“then compelled to take on another earthly form on this earth.”

To explain this planetary chain is admittedly difficult. “Some doubt,” Colville obligingly informs us, “if every one would understand it even if volumes were devoted to its elucidation.” Quite likely. At least it is comforting to know that its understanding is difficult, our own vanity being thus salved by this admission.

This doctrine, it seemed, was accepted because of its light on the inequalities in this life. Here is a good man, for instance, who suffers, and here is a bad man who is successful and happy. How do you account for this; is it just? This is the explanation of the Theosophist: You see a man under a crushing load of sorrow, suffering. He is a good man and yet he suffers justly because in a previous life he must have done such acts as deserve punishment now. And does the villain enjoy life and know no sorrow? It is because he was good in some previous existence. This is very wonderful. But more wonderful is the knowledge concerning the length of these earth pilgrimages. The number of lives we are each to live, according to Mr. Sinnett, is not less than six hundred and eighty, nor more than eight hundred. We are now about the middle of the fourth round—there are seven rounds in all—just about half through. So if this estimate is correct, we have each from three

hundred to four hundred chances yet to get good. A Brahmin, who probably knows about as much about this matter as Mr. Sinnett, says that we shall all be born 4,000,000,000,000 times, but we are not greedy, and will stick to Mr. Sinnett. It's a long time, even at the shortest, that stretches out before us, and through it all we are to reap what the wise ones dub "Karma"—that is, consequence. By this is meant not only the reaping from our own sowing, which is a Christian doctrine, but also the "Karma" of other lives.

This doctrine is most vigorously treated by President Warren of the Boston University in his baccalaureate address, 1897, "Art Thou a Human Being?" quoted by Dr. Barrows, and is well worth transcribing. "Here are men by the hundred millions who certainly know not what it is to be a man; men in whose estimation the love of a personal life is the supreme error; men by the hundred million who consider themselves as already lost and as already undergoing æonian punishment for sin committed in unremembered earlier lives—a punishment which can never cease so long as one individual consciousness shall cling to life. According to all the advocates of metempsychosis, the Karma which became embodied and perpetuated in me the moment I began to be, was nothing that belonged to my father or mother or to any of their traceable ancestors; it was something that be-

longed to a wholly different line of beings, the last of whom ceased the moment I began my life. . . . In the thought of all believers in incarnations in various natures there is no such thing as that which we call the human race, no vital unity of humanity. Part of the beings that have been members of the human family are now beasts and birds and reptiles—not to speak of yet lower or higher beings of non-human varieties. A short time ago all that to-day are men were other than human, and a short time hence all will be human no longer. In the realm of civil life a naturally ordered and conservatively administered state is impossible. A man to-day may be a woman to-morrow. Any apparently human ruler is liable at any time to lay aside his human form and take a year's vacation or a thousand years' vacation among the fairy-like goddesses, or among the demons or among the beasts of the field. Any subject of the state caught in the very act of stealing may turn out to be a god, commendably engaged in righting some ancient wrong that no man ever heard of."

To such fantastic straits are we brought by the logical ends of this doctrine. Yet all mindless of this, its votaries continue their romancings. Follow them yet a little while.

A subtle, tenuous medium, "Akasa," interpenetrates the entire universe, on which all thoughts and words and deeds are imprinted. These foot-

prints of your thought on the Akasa are as distinct to the eyes of the brothers as the print of your shoe on the sand. Now, this Akasa is said to have a "bad breath," "to work evil," to be, as Judge says, a "great hypnotizing machine"; that the evil of past centuries forms pictures which are suggested to the mind, and that we are at the mercy of the pictures made in this medium and reflected upon us.

This is horrible. And there is no escape. We are bound. Fate rules all. The cycles must run their rounds. Nowhere is there help. Shall we pray? "Prayer is folly," says Madame Blavatsky. Shall we act? We cannot, save as we are moved by the Karma, that vast power made up not only of my own deeds, but the deeds of the race. But if you persevere, conquer your body, through artificial fires, after treading the well-nigh endless rounds of existence, are purged from all desire—what then? Nirvana, the falling back into the ocean of non-being. "Theosophy," says Colville, "teaches the final extinction of individuality." This, then, is the end of these weary rebirths, and at the close of pilgrimages immeasurable, through fantastic worlds, man is offered as the great boon the plunge into the ocean of nothingness! Who bids one accept this fatalistic, Godless creed? Reason? No. Philosophy? No. Who? Madame Blavatsky. And who is she, and what credence

shall we give to her high claims? A Russian by birth, a nomad by instinct, a polyglot in speech, an ex-spiritualistic medium, an adventuress.

The test of the moral efficacy of this cult is easily made. We have but to turn to India, for there Buddhism has had undisputed sway for thousands of years, and Buddhism and Theosophy are virtually one. The ethics of Theosophy, Madame Blavatsky tells us, are identical with the ethics of Buddhism, and in the main, she might have continued, its doctrines. What then of this regenerating power of this gospel? Let India, with her system of caste, her ignorant priesthood, and yet more ignorant people, her suttees, her idolatries, her sorrows, her unspeakable degradation, answer. Buddhism has made Asia mild, but "it has not made Asia moral." As a regenerating power this vaunted Eastern cult has ever wretchedly failed. "It is not too much to say," says Dr. Mitchell, "that Christianity has done more for the elevation of India in the last eighty years than the other religions have accomplished in all the ages of their dominion." "By their fruits ye shall know them." Thus is Theosophy tried and thus is it condemned.

It was in 1875 that the Theosophical Society was organized, and its primal purpose was to institute a propaganda for the new doctrines of Madame Blavatsky. In a word, she claimed that these doctrines, published in "Isis Unveiled," were not

of her own invention, but that in India there were Mahatmas, masters in philosophy, who, through long contemplation, had arrived at the secrets of the universe, and that these "brothers" had inspired her to give these doctrines to the world. New York, proving incredulous, madame went to India to find a more gullible public. From far-off India there came from time to time reports of marvels that well-nigh dazed the Western minds. These Mahatmas, it was claimed, were in possession of knowledge altogether unknown to the outside world, and Western nations were only learning the alphabet of things. The "brothers" could send letters without means a thousand miles, they could work miracles, they could project their astral bodies anywhere in space, and much more. This news came to the "Society of Psychical Research," in England, which, doubting, yet willing to learn, sent a committee to investigate the marvels. At last we shall have an authoritative and unprejudiced utterance. The report is published, and what a fiasco is recorded. First, it is revealed that the letters supposed by Mr. Sinnett to have been written by Koot Hoomi, the Mahatma, were written by Madame Blavatsky, and that all these letters purporting to come from the "brothers" are the output of an unscrupulous syndicate!

All this is clear beyond word of doubting. Mr. Sinnett, Mr. Olcott, and others had written much

about the "precipitation" of flowers and letters dropping unexpectedly upon the head. Now these "precipitations" are discovered to be the commonest kind of fraud, flowers and letters being concealed in apertures in the ceiling, and at a given signal dropped by an accomplice.

Then there is the famous shrine, where so many miracles had been wrought, revealed as a vulgar trick. And lastly, putting large histories into a sentence, Madame Blavatsky, in 1885, confessed to her impositions to a Mr. Solovgoff, a reputable Russian author, urging him to become her confederate, he indignantly refusing and publishing the fraud to the world. Verily, as in the title of Mr. Garrett's book, is "Isis Very Much Unveiled." If, after these exposures, there shall yet be found those who are willing to be duped by this adventuress, by this out-at-the-elbow eclecticism, by these mild insanities of the Orient, then Puck's motto has been pointed again, "What fools these mortals be."

"The unaccomplished mission of society is to reconstruct society on the basis of brotherhood. It spiritualizes that ineradicable instinct which draws man to man and makes society—not a convention but a necessity."

"Bampton Lectures," Hatch, p. 216.

"There is not a virtue, a beautiful thought or a generous deed but has most of its roots hidden far away from that which can be understood or explained."

"Wisdom and Destiny," Maeterlinck, p. 110.

"It is related of Lord Chesterfield, that while visiting Paris he was entertained at the table of a distinguished lady of the Encyclopedia, a bitter foe of Christianity. She said to him, 'My Lord, I am informed that your English Parliament is composed of five or six hundred of the most profound and brilliant thinkers; this being so how do you account for the fact that the obsolete religion of the Nazarene Carpenter is still retained as the religion of the realm?' 'Madam,' he replied, 'it is a mere temporary makeshift. We are casting about for something better; when that is found Christianity must give way.' The world has been casting about for all these centuries for something better and has not found it."

"The Religion of the Future," Burrell, p. 12.

III

OTHERISM

Altruism is in the world. Men do not live and die unto themselves. There is the other-regarding as well as the self-regarding principle. The fierce struggle for existence is not all. There is also a struggle for others. Whatever the value of Mr. Drummond's book, "The Ascent of Man," as a technical contribution to scientific knowledge, there can be no question of its value as a brilliant and sympathetic exposition of the other-regarding principle, the sacrificial idea threading all life. With rare skill and poetic charm he tells us the story nature has taught him of the struggle for the life of others. "The first chapter or two," he says, "of evolution may be headed 'The Struggle for Life'; but take the book as a whole and it is not a tale of battle. It is a love story. It is told in primitive way, and in the beginnings 'The Struggle for the Life of Others' is the physiological name for the greatest word of ethics, Otherism, Altruism, Love. From Selfism to Otherism is the supreme transition of history." That an other-regarding principle should sooner or later appear

on the world's stage was a necessity if the world was ever to become a moral world. But the world was to be a moral world, being God's world, and this principle appeared. Mr. Drummond is its historian. From its beginnings in plant life our author traces its influence "throughout the whole range of the animal kingdom, until it culminates in its most consummate expression, a human mother"—from the purely physiological to the moral world.

Altrusim was in the world from the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. It is well. In this is largest inspiration and ever-broadening horizons. To know that one lives not unto himself, but that his fortunes are bound up with the race which it is his to serve, gives nobility to life and largest meanings. One feels the need of knowing that he is a fragment of a mighty whole, of convincing himself that the great current of race development is flowing through his veins, side by side with the current of individual self-development, and that his individual existence is but a trivial episode in the grand total of human existence. In the consciousness of his identification with a majestic organism that is flourishing and developing more gloriously from day to day he finds an unspeakably deep and tender consolation for the narrowness and brevity of his individual span of existence.

And to know that not only are our fortunes all linked with others, but that ours is kinship with

others and that we shall live for them, gives life the epic sweep.

But strange to say, at the very threshold of our inquiry we are met with the statement that Otherism and Christianity are at war. The religion of Jesus must give way to the religion of Altruism. The religion of the Nazarene, it is declared, has led to a diseased egoism. Christians care only for themselves. The dreamer Amiel cries out that he would not be saved if he were to be saved alone, but the disciples of Jesus, we are told, miss this high note, mindful solely of their own salvation.

The platform American caricaturist of Christianity is accustomed to speak of the Christian as a little man, treading a narrow path, thinking not of others, intent only upon escaping hell. This is to be expected from the caricaturist, but when grave thinkers are led to say that the religion of Jesus stifles the altruistic impulse one wonders how they have been so befogged.

And this morbid individualism, we are informed, bears fruit in the unfitness of Christians for any coöperative, salvational work. The Christian is pronounced ethically forceless by reason of his limitations. He is not fitted to deal with the mass. He is individualistic, egoistic, unhelping. Instead of concerning himself with the righting of wrongs here, the lifting of burdens here, he is

dreaming about his impossible heaven and his own salvation. The springs of the world's onward going are not in him.

Now that this criticism touches a certain antique type of Christianity, a certain perversion of Christianity—monasticism—cannot be denied. Mediæval, monastic, ascetic Christianity was not altruistic. It was narrow and selfish. It was the apotheosis of a diseased egoism. Christians representing this type regarded only themselves. They were not their brother's keepers. In the world was sin, and to save themselves from sin's contamination they fled. It was a fatal flight. To flee is to die. In the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky there are a half dozen stone cottages. They were once occupied by consumptives, who believed that by escaping from the poisoned atmosphere of the world, and breathing only the pure air of the cave, they would be restored to health. Quickly were they undeceived. One after another, in those unsunned homes, they drooped and died. The cave was their tomb. This is the fate of a religion that withdrawing from the world would find safety in the hermit's cell. Isolation is death.

Yet mediæval Christianity, it must be admitted, was the religion of the cave. Its extremity of egoism may be seen in the following typical confession: "I was so wholly satisfied in my own mind as to my eternal happiness that I was

resolved to be quiet and at rest, thinking that this revelation should have been beneficial to *nobody but myself.*"

But this antiquated Christianity is not the Christianity of to-day, and it is against the latter that an anti-Christian Altruism pits itself, to its everlasting confusion.

The Altruism tricked out by the secularist of to-day is first of all absurd. It professes a high regard for humanity, but only contempt for the individual. Let humanity survive, it declares, though men perish. Now this is very fine and high sounding, but very foolish, too. It is one of those inflated insanities that will not bear the prick of the pin.

For how can there be a regard for the whole if there is no regard for the parts that compose it? How can humanity be noble if man be base? How do your despicable units become a God? We are bidden to despise ourselves and honor humanity. "What is the highest pinnacle of perfection you can reach? It is realized as soon as you have reached the point of complete self-contempt; at that moment when your own happiness becomes the object of complete aversion." Despise yourself and honor your neighbor. But how can that be? If you despise yourself shall you not also despise your neighbor, for is not your neighbor but another yourself? Can you worship humanity, and yet have only a "contempt" for the individuals composing

it? And yet this deliverance is made with all seriousness. Man is depersonalized, sent back again, as in pro-Christian times, to the mass, to the lump, and in the dying of the individual is proclaimed the birth of humanity. With these gentlemen the man is nothing, the mass everything; and strange to say, it is held that through the mass you transform the man. Says one of George Eliot's characters: "The greatest power under the heavens is public opinion, the ruling belief in society about what is right and what is wrong, about what is honorable and what is shameful. That's the steam that is to work the engine." Very well, Mr. Felix Holt. And now what? To remedy conditions, continues Felix, you must get public opinion right. Very well again, and here our Altruists go all afieid. They think that public opinion can be gotten right before the individual opinion is gotten right. It is the common mistake of putting the cart before the horse. But how can public opinion be gotten right before individual opinion is gotten right? How can the crowd be converted without first converting the individuals that compose the crowd? Maybe some positivist dreamer can tell us, but, certes, no one else can.

With all your strivings the individual cannot be gotten rid of. Modern Altruism is unworkable. Granting that its ideals are high and its aims noble, it has no power by which its ideals can be trans-

lated into the real, by which its aims may be accomplished. Like the immortal Venus de Milo, to which Jean Paul would look for help, "it has no arms."

What shall we say of its basis of morality? There is a good and a bad, it says, a wrong, a right, truth, falsehood, virtue, vice. Very well. But on what actions shall we place these familiar labels? What is it that determines the moral quality of our deeds? Actions in themselves, we are told, have no ethical content. They are right or wrong as they effect society favorably or unfavorably. Virtue is that which promotes the general good, vice is that which hurts the general good. All actions are to be judged *solely by their effect upon society*. If society approves the action, considers that it is for its good, then the deed is right; if society disapproves of it, finds it hurtful, it is wrong. This is the *vox populi* with a will.

Follow the leadings of this logic. What is the standard of right? The general good, we are told. Test this logic by a case in the concrete. Mr. Max Nordau has lately seen fit to enlighten the world on the institution of marriage. "Marriage," he declares, "ought to be the victory of Altruism, but it is the victory of egotism. The consecration of morality and anthropological justification are utterly lacking in the modern marriage." He contends that its sanctity is not recognized, that pub-

licly the world professes attachment to the institution and the fidelity it requires, but in secret, "with closed doors, they sacrifice to nature, and wreak their vengeance upon any one who divulges the secrets of the eleusinian mysteries." "Unconditional fidelity," he proceeds, "is not an attribute of human nature," and "among ten thousand pairs of lovers there is barely one in which the man and the woman are in love with each other throughout their entire lives." Boldly this radical advocates the gratification of the polygamous instinct, "the abolition of the institution of matrimony, and a return to the uncontrolled mating of the animal world." All this, Nordau declares, would be for the *general good*. Let no utilitarian Altruist be shocked by such a conclusion. Now, if a certain number concludes that polygamy has never yet had a fair trial, and that introduced would be for the *general good*, no utilitarian could say nay. In the realm of morals is it supposable that an indignant minority would ever be bound by the will of the majority? If there is no difference between the institution of Christian marriage and the "uncontrolled mating of the animal world," save as after experimentation their comparative effects may be seen upon the *general good*, is it not clear that there will be a diversity of opinion upon this point, a refusal upon the part of the minority to be bound by the majority action?

If this doctrine be true, nothing can ever be considered settled. Recognized virtues may, after further experimentations, be discovered to be only antique vices. And *vice versa*, the villain who goes to sleep to-day may wake up to-morrow and find himself a saint. Who can say that amidst all this kaleidescopic whirl truth may yet be discovered to be the enemy of society, and that we shall not build altars to lies? Calendars of saints will need daily revision. And how, even if the general good should serve as the basis of morality, is Altruism straightened in its ability to realize its ideals. Confessedly its words have tonic strength. What nobler than these lines:

“ May I reach

That purest heaven and be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony
Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty,
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion made ever more intense;
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is still the gladness of the world.”

Yea, noble, but how can humanity be moved?
What motive force is here to turn the wheels?
Doctrines are but roads along which the world can
be driven; but power is needed to drive the world.
What will cause men to be Altruists in life, even
though they be Altruists in theory? What divine
voice will speak to the sordid millionaire and open

his eyes and ears to the sufferings of the poor? What spirit will so move upon the social world that all men, grown sympathetic and brotherly, will live divinely, unselfishly?

Men are selfish; set that down as a stubborn fact. How shall they be led out of selfishness into selflessness? What power will enable men to translate their vague yearnings into heavenly realities? Here is the rub, and it is a hard rub. It is more than a rub; it is a wall. With this philosophy it is not merely a difficulty, it is an impossibility. We begin very low. Here are two pigs which have only a single wallowing place, and each would like naturally to wallow in it forever. If each pig were in turn to rejoice to make room for his brother, and were conscientiously to regulate his delight in becoming filthy himself by an equal delight in seeing the other become filthy also, then you would have Altruism—a pig Altruism. Now, humanity, according to Herbert Spencer, Comte, and George Eliot, begins just here. It is wholly animal. Is it not evident that this gossamer Altruism which provides no motive for Altruism save a delight in seeing others happy is quite insufficient to lift the world out of such steaming animalism? Granted that for a few exceptional souls it would be all-powerful, would it reach the masses on the low levels? Will it reach the pig? Will the pig be tortured by any burning desire to

be "a cup of strength to others," and so to join "the choir invisible?" Restrain man's passions by such refined sentimentalism? As well attempt to leash with cobwebs the mighty waves of the sea.

There is a test for all claimants, an old test, a sure test—"by their fruits ye shall know them." These hypercritical gentlemen who have denounced Christianity as a diseased egoism, and who upon the housetops have declared a new gospel of brotherliness, would do well to show us some of the fruits of their labors. What are the net results of their struggle for the life of others? What have they contributed to the world's needs? In what sense and in what measure have they been their brother's keepers? The world's poverty—what have they done to relieve it? The world's sorrow—what have they done to brighten it? The world's unrest—what have they done to quiet it? The world's despair—what have they done to remove it? Aside from fine speeches and impracticable schemes, what have they given to this sore-hearted world? What are they giving it to-day? Nothing. Said Mr. John G. Wooley, in a great temperance address, "So long as God shall permit me to cry aloud against the liquor traffic, I shall cry aloud; when I can no longer cry aloud, I'll whisper, and when I cannot speak at all, *I'll make motions*—I'm good at that." And this is an Altruistic specialty.

60 Some Latter-Day Religions

These secularists, though with a different meaning, can *make motions*. In pyrotechnical displays and parliamentary agilities they are brilliant successes. But outside the salon, out there on the street, among a cursed, bruised, damned humanity, they are helpless. Dashing parlor soldiers are they, but the world needs not parlor soldiers. The world wants real fighters. George Eliot, Mrs. Ward, and all that brilliant coterie who represent the very best that this new gospel can give us, have, aside from a few paper schemes, contributed nothing at all to philanthropic endeavor, and their little artificial lights are pale and ineffectual in the blackness of the world's needs.

These culturists have been sneering at what they are pleased to call our "other-worldliness." We return the charge with interest. Lowell's lines, it is true, point a moral:

"The parish priest
Of austerity
Climbed up in a high church steeple
To be nearer God,
So that he might hand
His word down to the people.
"And in sermon script
He daily wrote
What he thought was sent from heaven;
And he dropped it down
On the people's heads
Two times one day in seven.

"In his age God said,
'Come down and die,'
And he cried out from the steeple,
'Where art thou, Lord?'
And the Lord replied,
'Down here among my people.' "

A poor place, indeed, for the priest, that high church steeple, rather than on the ground, ministering to the needy. But pray tell the difference between the priest in the "high church steeple" and the altruist, bestride his Pegasus, cleaving the blue, or reclining at the feast on Olympian heights, "careless of mankind"? Is it a greater sin to climb a steeple than to float on a cloud? The steeple way is not the only way to escape from earth's needs, and it is certainly as noble to write what he "thought was sent from heaven" as to utter the words that are heavy with the mold of earth; to proclaim a gospel coming down from God as to herald a religion born of earth's mists and darkness. We grow a-weary with all these flings at the impracticableness of Christianity from such impracticables. Common honesty would force the admission that the priest's sermons have a tone humaner by far than the altruist's essays. It must be admitted, too, that sometimes his words are not simply dropped down on the people's heads, but into their hearts and lives. And if to each, the priest in his temple and the altruist on his Olympus, should be borne the word, "Come down

and die," down among the people, is it from the lips of the priest or the altruist that we should look for the answering words, "Yea, Lord, I come, I come"? Until our fine philosophers shall get down from their speculative stilts they cut but a sorry figure in their criticisms of the impracticableness of religion.

Christianity is here its own apologist. To all its carping critics it answers simply, "Come and see." Do but note what it has done; do but look at its unselfish ministries; do but hear its gospel, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Christianity has been declared hurtfully egoistic, but where in all the mighty sweep of history has any other religion brought forth such rare unselfishness? Compare it, if you will, with its most formidable rival, Buddhism. Here its superiority cannot be questioned. While Buddhism, as has been said, "made Chinese Asia gentle in manners and kind to animals, it covered the land with monasteries, temples, and images; on the other hand, the religion of Jesus filled Europe not only with churches and abbeys, but also with hospitals, orphan asylums, lighthouses, schools, and colleges." In gracious beneficences Christianity is beyond all comparison with other faiths. And how could it be otherwise, with such a selfless gospel? Consider these exhortations: "Whosoever shall lose his life shall

find it." "Live not to yourselves," the Master said, "after I am gone, but go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." A young man comes to this Christ with the great question, "Good Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" "Go, sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and then come and follow me." Is this the gospel of selfishness? Was not Christ always calling men from the egoistic life? "Come, follow Me—" follow without hope of ease, follow through hardships and toil incredible, and watchings and fastings and prayers, through persecutions and yet persecutions, through Gethsemanes and Golgothas, on, on, to the bitter end. Is this the gospel of egoism? Was ever before or since so great a sacrifice called for in behalf of the "life of others"? And were those who worshipped him egoists? Follow these humble disciples as, under the inspiration of the words of the selfless teacher and the example of Him who for others' sake "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," they go forth into the interpretation and incarnation of this ministry, and see if the flowers of altruism spring not everywhere along their path.

There are John and James threatened with physical violence, and yet for love's sake declaring that "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." There is the martyr Stephen, telling a strange story, sealing its

truth with his blood, and in the hour of his beautiful vision, crying with his last breath, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." There are the unknown, unnamed ones, driven from their homes through persecutions, and yet without recompense or hope of earthly reward, "preaching the word." There is Saul of Tarsus, declaring "I am a debtor" to the whole world, and in the brave discharge of that debt, loves debt, through a life-long ministry, "in journeyings often, in perils of robbers, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness," beaten with rods, stoned, faltering never, pressing always on, until at last, having testified before Jews and Gentiles, before savages in northern wilds and before governors and kings, he sings in prison gloom, just before his imperial head is shorn from the body by Nero's ax, "I am now ready to be offered up." These were not egoists. Neither did this unselfish life die with the apostles, nor with the early disciples, who, through sacrificial labors, flashed within a few generations the light of the gospel from sand-girt pyramids to northern forests, from Asia's steppes to Britain's wilds. It lived on. It breathes in Polycarp, who declares his willingness to go to the lions. "I am ready to be ground by their teeth if only I may be

bread fit for the Master's table." It breathes in Judson, who, trampling upon fairest human prospects and worldly ambitions, gives himself to India's need. It breathes in Livingstone, who to heal the world's open sore gives himself to Africa's redemption, his heart buried beneath the moola tree at Ilala. It breathes in Father Damien, giving himself to that horrible living death among the lepers of Molokai. It breathes in John Williams, who, with poisoned arrows in his body, offers a prayer for his slayers. It breathes in Catherine Booth, who gives, in utter abandon of love, her life to darkest London. It breathes in the Earl of Shaftesbury, who, dying, thinks not of himself, but of others, crying, "Oh, I can't die and leave this world with all its sorrow in it! I want to stay and help." It breathes—ah! if the full list were given, "I suppose that not even the world itself would contain the books that should be written."

Christianity gives. It knows no withholding. Giving is its Alpha, its Omega, and all that lies between.

It gives hospitals to the unfortunate, homes to the poor, food to the hungry, hope to the despairing, joy to the mourner, peace to the storm-tossed, to the weary the rest of God. "It brings," in Mulford's eloquent words, "before the mind images of holy beauty, with no stain of decay. It transfig-

ures the sorrow of earth. It is indifferent to the finite, and is itself the morning and evening of the spirit. It breathes the happy isles; it sails into the sunset beyond the far Cathay. It is led by a mystic devotion; it is lost in the rapture of its joy. It rears temples which are the rest of the sorrow and the loneliness of earth, where weakness may pray and penitence may weep; where anguish may seek to quench its tears; where grief may strive to forget its pain, and hope to re-illumine its gloom."

For altruism to criticise this religion is for the sputtering rocket soon to lie ignoble in the mud, to criticise the sun clear shining in the sky, the only fountain of light.

"When we or others are suffering from any malady the Christian doctrine is that we are to use the best means at command and to pray 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not my will but thine be done.' The prayer may be answered by its effect upon the mind of the patient; by directing the nurse, physician, or the friends to the use of such means as may hasten recovery: or by a direct effect produced upon the physical system, behind the visible system of cause and effects, but reaching the patient through them; if the patient recovers, it will seem as though he recovered naturally, though it may be in an unusual manner. The Christian in his personal religious experience may believe that his prayer was the element that induced God to interfere with the course of nature and prolong life."

—"Faith-Healing," etc., Buckley, p. 44.

IV

FAITH-CURE

Faith-cure, like many others of these latter-day gospels, is not new. It is as old as the records of men. Every religion has boasted a shrine, a tomb of saint, where miracles of healing were wrought. In Greece, in Rome, in Egypt, this belief obtained. Christianity did not escape this fate. The apostles and others, in those wonderful days following upon Christ's earthly ministry, wrought miracles of cures and their "gifts of healing" were claimed by many who came after. Even such grave students as Augustine, Gregory, Chrysostom, held that miracles were not confined to the apostolic era, and that, to quote Augustine's words as given by Neander, "cures were wrought on sacred spots." These "sacred spots" were usually the burial place of some eminent Christian, around whose memory a halo of saintliness had formed. Martin of Tours, for example, Neander informs us, was at that time (in the sixth century) the object of universal veneration in France, and his tomb, over which a church had been erected, was repaired to for relief by sick persons of every description, and not a year passed

in which many instances were not recorded of "the insane, the nervous, the epileptic, the deaf, the dumb, the blind, being here restored to soundness and health." Not only were tombs of saints wonderful curative agents, but relics of saints as well. Thus early was the day opened for all the superstitions which came trooping in through the after years.

Marvelous incidents are related of cures wrought immediately by the prayers of faith. In 1373, during the plague in Sienna, hundreds falling victims daily, Catherine of Sienna, through the greatness of her faith and the fervor of her prayers, performed miracles of cure. All such phenomena, however, pale before the wholesale miracles wrought by Lourdes waters.

For the believers in this gospel we can have no harsh words. Along with others, the names of Blumhardt of Ball, the saintly Dorothea Trudel, Zeller, the superintendent of the Mannedorf institution, are to be found. Of our own countrymen, the names of Simpson and Gordon are linked with this belief.

But the purity of the lives of these white-souled ones and the glamour of their names should not blind the world to the mischievous, hurtful tendencies of this ism, nor should these be made to stand sponsors for all the vagaries that have been incorporated into their touchingly simple creed.

In this faith there are many sects, and no one creed accurately expresses its multiform phases. Perhaps, though, the following synopsis will serve as a rough and yet sufficiently accurate presentation of the modern doctrines of faith-healing:

First, all disease is the direct result of sin.

Second, all disease can be healed by faith.

Third, all disease can be healed without means—means are contrary to faith.

Fourth, all who believe they are healed are healed, although they continue to be sick.

Fifth, all cures are miracles.

These, with all their corollaries and infinite interplay, constitute the articles of faith of this new sect.

From this presentation it is seen at once how far the doctrine differs from that of mind cure, more commonly known as Christian Science. The believers in faith-healing recognize the existence of disease, but claim that it can be cured by faith. The believers in mind cure or Christian Science deny the very existence of disease. The former would emphasize the power of faith, the latter of disillusioning. The one aims at the extinction of belief in "means" in the cure of the body; the other at the belief in matter itself. So these cults differ by the width of the world, and of the two the doctrine of healing by faith is infinitely the more rational, although even that is no high praise.

The contention is in what shall follow: (1) That its data of cures is worthless; (2) that it has no justification in Scripture; (3) that it is unwholesome and hurtful in its effects; (4) that its logical sequences are monstrous and revolting.

Firstly, then, consider its cures. If its cures are to be measured by its claims, their name is legion. Not an apostle of this faith but points you to cures wrought; not an organ of this cult but publishes numerous testimonials from those professing to have been healed. Are these reports authentic? There is no reasonable ground for denial. Is, then, the case closed? On the contrary, such proof can be had for every admitted fraud since the world began. Does any rational being believe that the spring that is reported to have broken forth from the spot on which a little girl claimed the Virgin Mary stood—the water of Lourdes—has any curative value? Yet thousands will testify to the cures wrought by those waters. Does any one believe that cures are had in St. Anne Church, Quebec, because of the miracle wrought upon Father Chiniquy? Yet the crutches of former cripples hung upon the wall attest the miraculous power and sanctity of the cathedral. Is it seriously believed now that any healing virtues resided in Mesmer's "tractors"? Yet thousands in the day of the great thaumaturgist were his enthusiastic dupes? Is it our thought to-day

that Mormon elders and apostles of Brigham Young could work miraculous cures? The answer need not be given, and yet we should bear in mind that one of the chief causes of the wonderful spread of Mormonism was the supposed power of these apostles of the new faith to heal the sick.

Take an illustration nearer home. Here are two literatures before you. One is the literature of faith-healing. It fairly bristles with the marvelous. Wonder much is yours. But—and this is not cited to cast an odium upon this gospel, but simply to show the worthlessness of such proof—here is a literature also setting forth the value of all sorts of worthless nostrums, chock full of marvels, too. Put these two literatures side by side, and you will discover that there is not a case reported in the one literature that is not paralleled in the other. Does the faith-healer cure rheumatism? So does the other. Does divine healing raise up some man from the curse of consumption? So does the nostrum concocted by a conscienceless quack. The “healer” and the charlatan have each at his command the same kind of proof. Do these thousands of honest witnesses testify to the efficacy of faith-cure? Then these thousands of equally honest people set the seal of virtue upon some worthless preparation at which the scientist smiles. That men and women can be found ready to declare that

they owe their recovery to faith-healing in itself proves absolutely nothing. This *vox populi* is absolutely valueless. The cures wrought by the healer, by faith without the use of means, can be duplicated by the testimonials to any of the admitted quackeries of the day. This sort of proof is not worth the paper on which it is set forth, yet it is paraded as the end of all controversy.

What does it all mean? This: that faith-healing, Christian Science, *et id genus omne*, are bringing us to a realization of the value of what might be rightfully denominated mental therapeutics. That these cures are miracles wrought by God in answer to prayer is not to be held; that they are cures wrought by the mind itself is beyond question. The connection between mind and body states is closer than we have been wont to believe, and the curative power of the mind over the body has been too largely overlooked. That the mind is a curative agent, and that the body not seldom yields to its suggestion, needs no argumentation. Too many authentic instances of this are on record to permit a question mark after the statement. There is here no room for skepticism. That the mind is not omnipotent in the sphere of healing, that it has its limitations, need not be said, but that in the cure of many diseases, especially those of a nervous order, it is almost magical in its workings, is beyond controversy. The siege of one of the Hol-

land cities will be recalled, and the pestilence that raged within the beleaguered city. William of Orange, the popular, introduces into the shut-in city two small vials, purporting to contain medicines priceless and marvellous. They were, of course, worthless. But the people believed in them, believed that providentially they had been sent, swallowed greedily a few drops of the precious liquid, and were cured! Here is not simply a cure of an individual, but the abatement of a pestilence! Was a whole people shamming? Nay. Was there really an epidemic? Yea. And it was arrested? Beyond question. How? By the mind itself. This is not an isolated case. Dr. Buckley tells us of an actor who was suffering agony from the toothache. A physician who was in the house was called. Without his medicine-case he was powerless. Not altogether so, for quick-wittedly he wrapped up a silver dollar in a cloth, and telling the sufferer that here was an agent that always soothed, bade him press it against the affected part. His directions were faithfully complied with, and the patient reported instantaneous relief. Who that has studied ever so little the wonderful history of mesmerism that does not recall the quack Mesmer, in his flowing violet robes, performing miracles of healing? Who has not read of the perambulating mountain evangelist, George O. Barnes, of Kentucky, and the healing power of his

little vial of goose oil? What physician that does not know the efficacy of "bread pills"? These are all hints of the possibilities of the mind's control over the body. Virtue is not in the little bottles introduced into Leyden, not in the silver dollar used to cure the actor, not in Mr. Barnes's goose oil, not in bread pills, but in the action of the mind itself.

This brings us to an understanding of the *how* of the cures made by the healers—cures that are not the answer to the prayers of the healer, but purely the result of the mental processes of the patient. It is in truth faith that heals, but a faith resident in the sufferer, not in the operator. Faith, whether it be in magical vial, or Mormon elder, or tomb of saint, or a bit of the cross, or king's touch, or charm, or amulet, or fetich, or bread pill, or "divine healing," is equally potent. So far as cures are concerned in number or quality, there is no difference between any of these agencies. Valentine Greatrakes, besieged at Cork, at Liverpool, at London by great crowds—a quack through and through—performs more miracles than any of the healers of our day. The act of faith is itself curative. The effect of a vivid imagination, a strong persuasion of cure on the nervous system, is almost incalculable. Nervous diseases can certainly be cured in many cases by the action of the mind itself. And we should bear in mind that the

number of such diseases is greater than at first sight we should conclude. As quoted by Dr. Schofield, Sir B. Brodie declares that of all the cases of diseased joints among the upper classes four-fifths at least are purely functional and of nervous origin. A keen critic of this gospel reminds us that every day skilled physicians are themselves deceived by disease, apparently organic, which is really of nervous origin, and that no doubt those who report cures of organic diseases are mistaken in their diagnoses. A large majority of the healed are women, who are peculiarly liable to those distressing nervous diseases that simulate organic disease. Let the testimony of an honest, capable witness, an unbiased student of all these phenomena, Dr. Schofield, conclude this part of the study. "After a most careful examination and prolonged inquiry, I have failed to find a single organic cure. The published cures of faith-healers include such organic diseases as heart-disease, consumption, gout, tumors, measles, diphtheria, etc., but we can only repeat that prolonged investigation and application to leaders in the movement all fail in establishing one single case of the cure of organic disease; while, on the other hand, inquiry shows that nervous diseases of all kinds are cured in large numbers."

The second proposition is that the dogma of faith-healing finds no support in the Scriptures.

The fundamental mistake made by all the apostles of this faith in their interpretation of Scripture is their failure to comprehend that in the Church of Christ there are transient and permanent ministries, gifts temporary and local, and gifts universal and abiding. Thus the "gift of tongues" is transient, fading out in the apostolic days, while the gift of teaching is permanent. The gift of "working of miracles" is passing, the ministry of love abides. That certain phenomena, certain gifts, certain manifestations of the Spirit were characteristic of the apostolic days and *no other*, the believers in faith-cure fail to see, and this blindness is fatal to truth of interpretation. Undoubtedly the apostles and the disciples of Christ wrought miracles of cures, but this exceptional ministry was not perpetuated. These wonderful powers were not transmitted to those who came after, the heated imaginations of the somewhat superstitious "fathers" to the contrary notwithstanding. Even during the apostolic ministry these gifts of miracles seem to fade. President J. W. McGarvey, one of the most careful and reverential of Biblical interpreters, holds that the cases of Trophimus, whom Paul left at Miletum "sick," of Epaphroditus, who was "nigh unto death," of Timothy's ailment, show conclusively that cures by miracles no longer obtained in the infant church. Paul's thorn in the flesh, which nearly all commentators hold to

have been some physical trouble, was not removed, even though he besought the Lord again and again that it might be taken away. If miracles were being wrought then, surely one would have been wrought for Paul. If faith could cure, then this mighty man of faith would have been cured. This ministry of healing was not abiding.

The exhortation of James, "Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord," is cited by this school, and singularly enough the stress is laid only on the "prayer of faith," the therapeutic value of the "oil" being conveniently ignored. Matthew viii. 17, "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses," is one of the stock passages of the healer; but no one who is not the dupe of a theory can believe in the face of the New Testament teaching that Jesus Christ on the cross made an atonement for sickness as well as for sin. To twist this tender passage setting forth Christ's perfect identification and sympathy with us into the unwarranted support of a dogma of faith-healing, is little short of blasphemy.

There is no question in all this of the divine power. That God can heal the sick without the use of "means," none deny, but that He does so heal is the matter in question. That God can work a miracle, all Christians believe, but that He does

work miracles in these latter days few Christians affirm. The days of miracles, special phenomena, serving their purpose in the Christ and apostolic ages, are over. That a world distance separates between these New Testament miracles and the cures of the healers of to-day, may be readily proven.

The miracles of Christ and the apostles were instantaneous. The blind man received his sight, the deaf man his hearing, the palsied his strength immediately. In the reported cures of the healer, the miracle is spread out over a number of days, weeks, and months.

Christ and the apostles never failed in their cures. No matter what the conditions, the cures were effected, the miracles wrought. The faith-healer, even according to his own admission, sometimes fails—frequently fails.

Miracles wrought by Christ and the apostles were not always conditional, indeed only rarely upon the faith of the sufferer; the faith-healer can do nothing unless the patient has faith.

Christ and the apostles healed "*all* manner of diseases." "The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up."

This faith-healing cannot even pretend to do. It cannot give sight to one born blind, or hearing to one born deaf. It cannot set a broken arm. It

cannot raise the dead. If, as is the contention, miracles are wrought now as in the days of Christ, why are not these miracles paralleled? No faith-healer has ever restored a limb cut off. Yet Christ did. "And there came unto Him great multitudes, having with them the lame, blind, deaf, *maimed*, and many others, and they cast them down at His feet, and He healed them." The dumb were made to speak, the blind to see, and the *maimed* were made *whole*.

The faith-healer says that miracles are wrought by prayers, and adduces as proof the story of a man cured of cancer. But the skeptical will still doubt, questioning if in truth the man suffered from a cancer. But let us have proof palpable and unmistakable. Here, for example, is the last recorded miracle of Christ before His crucifixion: "And a certain one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and struck off his right ear. But Jesus answered and said: 'Suffer ye thus far.' And He touched his ear and healed him." Let but the faith-healer duplicate this case, let him work a miracle, ocular and demonstrable, and no longer will the world be unbelieving.

The system is unbiblical in its contention that the use of means is a denial of faith. In the divine Word it is not so. God works through means. Abraham is saved by faith, yet it is a faith never disregarding means, and thus of all the heroes of

the Book. Instruments are ever employed by God. Means are used. And can one not use means and yet look trustingly to God? Is not St. Peter's as much Da Vinci's creation, though means were used—blocks of marble, bullock-carts to draw them, machinery to lift them in place—as if without the use of "means," by a single word it had been conjured into being? The prayer runs "Give us this day our daily bread." Does God give it? Yes. Without the use of means? No. Through fertile soil and rain and dew and sunshine and the labor of the husbandman God answers the prayer. This denial of means degrades God into a mere wonder-worker, and the All-Father everywhere becomes the cheap thaumaturge for the gaping crowd.

The system is anti-Scriptural, in its virtual denial of death. If miracles are wrought through faith, if "all diseases can be healed through faith," then it follows that given faith and its complete mastery of disease, man will never die. But the Bible teaches the death of the body. All must die. "For it is appointed unto all men once to die" is the solemn reminder of the Scriptures. "All diseases can be healed through faith," declares the latter-day religion. Faith-healing is not only unscriptural, but anti-scriptural.

The third proposition is that it is mischievous, unwholesome, hurtful in its effects.

Its danger is often immediately and outwardly recognizable. Through its refusal to use the means that an enlightened science has given us for the cure of the body, the lines of life are often rudely and prematurely snapped. Its bitter fruit is death. Hundreds and thousands sleep to-day in the grave who, but for the delusions of this false gospel might be in the enjoyment of life and health. To refuse the use of means perfected through the experience of the ages, seems nothing short of a crime. Murder is done, although it may not be in the first degree.

It nurtures egotism. Its advocates come to regard themselves as the anointed ones, enjoying God's special favor, and speak contemptuously of their brethren, to their thinking, all benighted. It begets Pharisaism. Through its extravagancies and fanaticisms Christianity is brought into disrepute. Truly has it been said that "When the world, that ought to be repenting, is taken up with staring, the sobriety of faith is lost in the gospel of credulity." What harm is there in this doctrine? Let another answer. "Very great, indeed. Its tendency is to produce an effeminate type of character which shrinks from pain and concentrates attention upon self and its sensations. It opens the door to every superstition, such as attaching importance to dreams, signs, assurances, etc. It gives support to other delusions which claim a

84 Some Latter-Day Religions

supernatural element. It seriously diminishes the influence of Christianity by subjecting it to a test which it cannot endure. It diverts attention from the moral and spiritual transformation which wherever made manifests its divinity. It destroys the ascendancy of reason, and thus, like similar delusions, it is self-perpetuating, and its natural, and in some minds irresistible, tendency is to mental derangement.

The remaining contention is, that the logical sequence of this doctrine is monstrous and absurd. One of the cardinal tenets of this faith is "All cures are miracles." Several years since, in the *Century Magazine*, appeared a debate between Dr. Buckley and Mr. A. B. Simpson, of New York, founder of a sect of faith-healers. Dr. Buckley claimed that the cures of faith-healing could be paralleled elsewhere in the regions of quackeries, by Indian medicine men, and apostles of Mormonism, and that if, as Mr. Simpson claimed, "All cures were miracles," then these cures in Scampdom were miracles, too. Driven to the wall, Mr. Simpson admitted such to be the case, admitted that they were miracles, but that they were wrought by the devil! Then the devil has been a very successful practitioner, and has had in all the ages a deservedly large clientele. Mr. Simpson has at least made a contribution to theology in having found a place for his satanic majesty and a benefi-

cence in his ministry. Tell the truth and shame the devil? The rather, tell the truth and glorify the devil.

Here is another article of its creed: "All disease can be healed by faith." Then we must rewrite the history of Christendom. We have been wont to speak of Luther, Savonarola, Knox, Huss, Calvin, Wesley, Fox, Brainerd, as heroes of faith, but alas! they are all discrowned. For these could work no miracles of cure. The acceptance of this dogma means a new calendar of saints, a new list of the martyrs, other stars in the firmament of faith.

The third article in the creed is, "All disease is the direct result of sin." One recalls an incident in the life of our Lord. One is brought into the Master's presence. "Rabbi," said His disciples, "who did sin, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?" Jesus answered, "*Neither did that man sin nor his parents*; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Faith-healing says sickness is the result of sin, the Christ says it is not. Disregarding His teachings, into what absurdities are we plunged. What a doctrine is this, that all disease is the result of sin, an evidence of lack of faith in the patient; that in proportion as we are unbelieving we suffer!

Then Job must have been a deep-dyed villain. Then Alexander Stephens, poor, frail, suffering

man, must have been most unrighteous. Then the blind schoolmaster, John Milton, with his clouded life, must have been lacking in faith, though he sang of God and the Paradise regained! Then Brainerd, spitting out his heart's blood in the darkness of the wild, must have greatly sinned! Then Robert Hall must have been prince of heretics! Then the martyr missionaries who droop and die beneath the torrid sun of Africa need to learn of faith from these healers at home. "Suffering is through lack of faith." Believe, and your sickness is gone. These suffer, therefore they are without faith. A most cruel gospel, and irrational! Do these enthusiasts really believe that all the good men and women of the world, the martyrs of yesterday and the martyrs of to-day, martyrs to disease, martyrs to hardships for Jesus' sake—that these suffer because they have sinned? This assumption itself should condemn the movement in the thought of every rational mind. What a paralysis of tenderness would it beget! Does my friend suffer—is he slowly dying of consumption? Yes, but I shall not grieve overly much, for his suffering is because of sinning, of unfaith. Then, too, every dying man or woman goes out of this world destitute of faith. For "faith heals all diseases," even the diseases which bring us to our death, and our dying is but the agonized declinal of our unfaith!

Is this proposition malignant in its sweep? Its converse is ludicrous. If sickness be the result of sin, health is the result of virtue. If suffering is a measure of one's unbelief, enjoyment is a measure of faith. Thus it is easy to detect a rogue, to know a saint. Do but inquire as to the physical man—lungs, liver, heart, circulation, digestion. If this is all right, take off your hat to a saint; if not, look icily down upon a sinner. The only requisite for church membership is a doctor's certificate of body soundness. To such absurd lengths does this cult bring us.

Let but this faith be held, let but the world come to look upon God as a mere wonder-worker, let men hold that as they are believing so shall they be free from pain, then all who suffer will either endure the torments of the damned, holding their sufferings as evidences of their unbelief, or else turn from all faith in the Supreme in bitterness and despair.

But passing all other absurdities is the fourth article of the creed, "All who believe they are healed, are healed, although they continue to be sick."

"I hold," says one of its advocates, quoted by Dr. Schofield, "that all who come to God for healing and accept it by faith in His appointed way are healed, no matter what may be the evidences of their senses to the contrary." This passes

the possibilities of serious criticism. That one is healed and yet remains sick; that as one of the believers in this gospel puts it, you may be cured for three or four years "before receiving the demonstration of it," is an over-heavy strain upon our credulity. Henceforth Hamlet's soliloquy has lost its point—"To be or not to be." Why, dear Hamlet, you can "be" and yet "not be" in the same hour.

But to contend with a mirage, to cross swords with a phantasy, to argue with a moonbeam, is bootless. So let us have done with this gospel, praying all and most sincerely that we may have faith, that we may have more faith, but a faith that is aglow with life, a-tingle with action, a faith that uses "means," that issues in "works," without which it were a dead thing, fit only for confined darkness and the sleep of the grave.

"It (the moral consciousness) hates any theory that would heal its hurt slightly or cry 'peace' when there is no peace, yet it cannot reconcile itself to the idea that there is no healing for its wound, no way to put an end to its spiritual conflict with itself and the world. . . . It lives as it were in the shadow of death, but it never ceases to believe in light and life and to long for them and to prophesy them. The unique character of Christianity lay in this, that it was the response to the demand of such a divided moral consciousness. It was reconciliation for spirits that were in the deepest contradicatures with themselves and with the world. It was an optimism addressed to those who were overpowered and possessed by the consciousness of misery and sin, good news of the kingdom of heaven to those whose souls were penetrated and oppressed with a sense of all the evils done under the sun. And it presented all this . . . as realizable there and then."

"The Evolution of Religion," Edward Caird, vol. i. p. 87.

"No philosopher so easily explains himself as Schopenhauer. His philosophy was simply the foundation of his own ineffably petty and uncomfortable disposition. . . . The truth is that our modern pessimism means but two things: cowardice and selfishness. The selfish—it is a merciful provision—always in the long run suffer the most, though it may seem otherwise. And no observing man will deny that this is comparatively an age of cowardice. At any rate it is an age of anæsthetics. Those who, like Mr. Henley, chant 'The song of the Sword,' are thus far right; and well may we pray for the spirits of our brave forefathers, who went to battle with stouter hearts than we take to the dentist."

"The Religion of a Literary Man," Le Gallienne, p. 35.

V

PESSIMISM

In one of his incisive essays Dr. Heber Newton refreshes our memories with that clever bit of satire from the poet-preacher, Theodore Parker, entitled "A Bumblebee's Thoughts on the Plan and Purpose of the Universe." "On the 21st day of June," the story runs, "in the year 1000617 before our era, there was a great scientific convention of Bumblebees (*Apis Bombax*) in a little corner of a valley in the Jura Mountains." At the close of the convention, and as fitting climax, all the representatives assembled to listen to an address from the president, the greatest authority in the Bumblebee world. Through powerful reasoning, the savant led his hearers to this conclusion: "Such, gentlemen, is the purpose of the world; the Bumblebee-Oom thought is the standard measure of the world of things; the Bumblebee consciousness is the true macrocosm, the real great world. The possibilities of mind and matter are exhausted in the universe, and its plan and purpose is the Bumblebee. But, gentlemen, there is one faculty of our multiform consciousness I have not named as

yet, though I think it the greatest of all. I mean the power of criticism. Let me apply this highest faculty of the Bumblebee to the universe itself, for that is the proper object of our criticism. For a grasshopper, or even the largest beetle, to criticise the universe were ridiculous; but for us it is proper." He then alluded to his own qualifications for such criticism his great age:—"I have buzzed four summers;" his wide travels—"I have been up to the highest fir-tree—yea, have blown over it, and touched the sky." All of which warranted the statement, "If I am a judge of anything, it is of the universe itself." He then proceeds to criticise it. His general observations are favorable. "However, gentlemen, it is not so large as we have commonly supposed, nor so wonderful. I cannot approve of all things in it. Too much time was consumed in preparing for our race. The Bumblebee might have existed 2,000,000 years before he did, and all that time was lost. Then the trees are too tall, such I mean as bear the most valuable flowers. Why must the Bumblebee fly for his daily food to such an exceeding height? The conditions of life are too difficult. Why does not honey run all day in any place or fall each night like dew? Why must we build our houses and not find them built? This is a hard world to live in—yes, needlessly hard." The eloquent orator thus closed: "Such, gentlemen, is the universe, such its

parts, such its purpose and plan. Such, also, are its defects, and such is the proved preëminence of the Bumblebee, who is not only its crown and its completion, but who can enjoy and comprehend it all—nay, can look beyond and see its faults and find a severe and melancholy pleasure in thinking that it might be better made."

Such criticisms have been made this side the 21st day of June in the year 1000617. Bumblebee philosophy is even now in vogue, and there are orators not a few who "find a severe and melancholy pleasure" in thinking that the world might have been better made. The delightful modesty of these savants is indicated in the title of a book recently sent forth to illumine the world, "If I were God." To these omniscients the world is all "out of joint"—so badly out of joint, in truth, that even they cannot set it right. The Bumblebee, however, is quite outstripped in criticism; for our latter-day pessimists not only find a severe and melancholy pleasure in thinking the world was not all that it might have been, but even go so far as to assert that this is the very worst possible world—malignant, cruel, demon-haunted, chance-governed. Life is cheap. Joy is elusive. Crosses are the only realities. Death is our only friend. All things mock us. Richter's dream is awful truth; there is no Father.

The literatures of the world abound with illustrations of this despondent view of life. Said the

sophists, "The best thing is not to be born; the next best thing is to die as soon as possible." All Greek literature, despite its occasional joyousness, is haunted by this minor. When the painter comes, in the sacrifice of Iphigenia, to represent the sorrow of those who witnessed it, while the faces of the others are made to depict a heart-rending grief, the greater grief of the father is admirably portrayed by drawing a veil over his face, meaning thereby that no kind of countenance might be made to express such a sorrow. So ever in their deepest thinking did the Greeks represent the greatness of grief. The pathos of human life could not be told save by the veil. Only silence might hint at it. Only wordlessness was eloquence.

The Orientals have ever held this gloomy view of life. Their religions are all rooted in most cheerless pessimism.

"Lo, as the wind is, so is mortal life,
A sigh, a sob, a storm, a strife."

Omar Khayyam, most brilliant and most saddening of poets, sings:

"Yesterday *this* day's madness did prepare;
To-morrow's silence, triumph, or despair:
Drink! for you know not whence you came nor why,
Drink! for you know not why you go nor where."

Nor is there help anywhere.

"And that inverted bowl they call the sky,
Whereunder crawling, cooped, we live and die,
Lift not your hands to *it* for help, for it
As impotently moves as you or I."

This weary cry of the Orient is echoed in the Occident. Diderot, in his letter to Sophie Voland, says, "To be amid pain and weeping, the plaything of uncertainty, of error, of want, of sickness, of wickedness, of passion, every step, from the moment when we learn to lisp, to the time of departure when our voice falters; not to know whence we come, why we are come, whither we go—this is called—life!"

The French Ouida expresses her conception of the unfriendliness of life and its disappointments in the words put at the head of "Sigma."

"I cast a palm upon the flood,
The deeps devour it.
Others throw lead and lo!
It buoyant sails."

The German Goethe speaks through "Faust," and the melancholy truth is set forth to solemn music that all quests of the hero, his life-search for knowledge, are unsatisfying.

"And here I stand with all my lore,
Poor fool, no wiser than before."

The English Byron, not only in mocking song, but in baldest prose, expressed his disgust of life. Speaking of immortality, he petulantly cried, "I want none of your immortality; I want only to sleep, to sleep forever."

And even the American Emerson swells this chorus of dissatisfaction: "Like sick men in hospitals, we change only from bed to bed."

Small wonder it is with such leadings that a host of camp-followers should plague the world with their sickly songs, their disgusting Wertherisms, their Byronisms, all befouled!

Not only has pessimism gotten itself into literature, but into philosophy. Schopenhauer, Hartman, Leopardi, and other sad-visaged ones have draped the world in mourning. Their thesis is that this is the worst possible world. Says Leopardi, "But one thing is certain—pain persists."

Says Schopenhauer: "If you try to imagine as nearly as you can what an amount of misery, pain, and suffering of every kind the sun shines upon in its course, you will admit that it would be much better if on the earth, as little as on the moon, the sun were able to call forth the phenomena of life." And in another place: "If you want a safe compass to guide you through life and to banish all doubt as to the right way of looking at it, you cannot do better than accustom yourself to regard this world as a penitentiary, a sort of penal colony, as the earliest philosophers called it." So wretched is this world that he quotes approvingly the belief that men are but evil spirits making atonement in this world for the crimes committed in another.

Nor is this withered creed confined to literature and philosophy; it has sunk, a disquieting thing, into the hearts of many. The Vanitas is not seldom heard. All have their despondent moods.

Natures the most optimistic at times are shadowed. Chilled we are by words of horror rattling in the throat of a dying faith.

Let us note some of the causes of pessimism.

With many it is purely temperamental. Their pessimism is not a reasoned thing, but rather the product of melancholy. By nature they are despondent. They are born pessimists. The child complains of his eyes. He is taken to an oculist. The wise man puts glasses on him. So heredity has put glasses on many a child, not to correct, but to distort vision. Children are born into the world thus handicapped; gloomy philosophy is in their blood. It is very easy to say they should not be so, easy to tell them they should be happy. And it is as foolish as it is easy. We might as reasonably tell a lean man that he should be fat; the man of five feet four that he should be five feet ten. Nature's limitations must be regarded. Some people are constitutionally sanguine, hopeful, happy; others distrustful, hopeless, sad. The "blues" is as real as measles. Let not the man with red blood and rich tell the man whose blood, thin as water, oozes rather than flows through his veins, that he should be an optimist. The subject of his criticism might as reasonably be expected to have two heads. Max Nordau, who defines this kind of pessimism as "crankiness," says of it:

"This kind of pessimism neither reasons nor argues. It has no classifications, no systems. It does not make the slightest attempt to explain why the world and life are not satisfactory to it; it merely feels instinctively that everything that exists is unendurable." But it must not be harshly dealt with, Nordau says. "It is always the attendant phenomenon of some disease of the brain, either already fully developed or as yet only in its incipient stages. Such a brain must necessarily reflect the world like an eye overgrown with a cataract, as the tragic darkness of chaos. All the great poets of the "world-is-out-of-joint" style have been deranged organisms. Lenau died a lunatic; Leopardi was a sufferer from certain generic affections well known to physicians conversant with mental disease; Heine was never gloomy nor melancholy until his spinal disease had extended its constantly increasing depredations to his brain; Byron's eccentricity of character is called genius by the unprofessional, while the psychologist's technical term for it is 'psychosis.' "

Pessimism is then with many purely temperamental. For these constitutional unfortunates we have only pity, not criticism. And yet these unfortunates go too far. So long as they insist that they are unhappy, and that from *their* standpoint the world is a penitentiary, we listen with respect if not belief, but when they would make their own un-

happiness the measure of the world's joy and their own view-points the view-points of all, we feel that the sick man is abusing his privilege. If your back is crooked, we are very sorry for you, but please do not say that all our backs are crooked. If your house has no windows in it, you have our sympathies, but pray do not say that we, too, live in dungeons. If nature put blue glasses on you, have grace at least not to try to put them on another. If your body is crooked, keep your plaster cast to yourself.

Candor compels the statement that much of pessimism is rooted in affectation. Men affect this habit as they would the cut of a coat or the turn of a hat. It is supposed to be interesting. Pale thoughts, like pale cheeks, are thought to attract. Byron set the pace, and his successes lure others on. Intellectual invalidism, which must have the room darkened and the sun quite shut out, is one of the diseases of the fashion of to-day. To wring the hands over the woes, real or imaginary, of the world is regarded as a most enviable occupation. To shed tears over a bungle in creation, and to wipe them gracefully away, is reputed quite an accomplishment. And then it is supposed to be an evidence of thoughtfulness. Professor Momerie declares "that pessimism is a state of mind which can only exist in thoughtful, and, indeed, in somewhat sympathetic persons." This may be true of

the genuine article, but it is certainly not true of much that masks as pessimism in these our days. The really great thinkers, as it may appear later on, are not followers of this philosophy, and it is no evidence of superior intellectual acumen or sympathetic insight to call the world hard names. The ponderous oration of the Bumblebee does not quite assure us of his intellectual greatness and the infallibility of his conclusions. To pelt the universe with impertinent questions and shallow exclamations does not imply wisdom. The universe resents your familiarity, and does not care to be poked in the ribs by such as you. Belike, all your dreamed of improvements on the existing order, your marvels of reconstruction would be improvements *à la* Bumblebee.

For much of the pessimism of to-day the materialistic temper of the age is responsible. Our civilization is material, and differs in its grossness from all preceding forms. The Hindoo civilization expressed itself in philosophy and great religions; the Greek civilization found its expression in the drama, art, and perfect forms of human beauty. Our civilization has its supremest expression in the material, in ships, houses, railroads, bridges—things. Even grosser than the materialistic spirit of the Greeks worshipping at the shrine of beauty is the spirit of the now building altars to utility. Great is the empire of things. And this is one of

the root causes of much of the despondency of to-day. The world puts its trust in things, and finds them all-unsatisfying. Never did materialism loom so large and never was it so helpless. Let thought and love be centered here, and the dying of things will give us pain. And die things will. The tree perishes, the flower fades, the hill wears away, the earth rushes to its doom. The shadow of death is over all. Now it is evident that he whose love is fixed upon that which is transitory, fleeting, perishing, will come to grief. Earth idols are quickly shattered, and love lies bleeding beneath their fragments. Identify yourself in thought or in affection with the sense-world, and with its passing there will come the wrench of life. So long as men shall rest their happiness in things, so long will they link themselves to pain. Moore's conception of happiness is sensuous, material, reveling in the scents and sounds and visions of earth, and the poet, pained by earth's fading beauty, sings his saddest song. "Man was made to mourn." In truth, if the springs of happiness are here he is right.

"The flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow dies;
All that we wish to stay
Tempt, and then flies."

If it be true, and if this world holds our all, then happiness is but a dream, with wakening most

cruel. Solomon tasted the bitterness of this cup. "The living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything; their love and their hatred is now perished; neither have they any more forever a portion in anything that is done under the sun"—most dismal words, dropping like clods on dead and coffined hope. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity"—true summing up of life by him who seeks happiness in the outward and perishable.

Pessimism is not seldom rooted in sin. Saints are optimists. Our sins are the only consistent pessimists. For nothing so robs the world of glory, life of dignity, as sin. To the sinner the universe is always ugly. His jaundiced vision will have it so. Says Hamlet to Rosencrantz, who denies that "Denmark's a prison," "Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison." The world is what you think it, palace or dungeon, and the man who has yielded himself to sin will find it, as did the imperial Dane, "a prison." One has but to test this by his own experience. It is not when we are at peace with conscience and with God, hearts cleansed from sinning, that the universe seems a jumble, a contradiction, a cheat, a lazarus-house, but in the hours when the flesh has gotten the mastery and from us the angels of goodness have withdrawn. Whenever we are alive to a sense of victory over our lower natures, the uni-

verse is transfigured and divine. On the heights of Abraham, on a simple slab marking the spot where the hero fell, is the inscription, "Here died Wolfe, Victorious." No man could be a pessimist on that consecrated spot. Wherever victory's banner has waved, there will men dare to hope. The heights of Abraham are ever the citadels of optimism. It is when we come to our Waterloos in the spirit's battlings that the world seems dark and malign. Set it down that sin, wherever met and in whatever guise, is the enemy of optimism.

Another source of pessimism is unbelief. Doubt is always willing to introduce the poisoned creed. With loss of faith there is always loss of joy. The songs of unbelief are ever in the minor. As heaven recedes, the clouds gather. He who has ceased to believe in other worlds finds this world small and mean. When another life is no longer real, the life that is can be no longer brimmed with joy. Pathetic and haunting are the words from the shadow-world of the unbelieving. Listen to the sorrowful cry of Swinburne:

"Thou hast sent us sleep and smitten sleep with dreams,
Saying joy is not but love of joy shall be;
Thou hast made sweet springs for all the pleasant streams,
In the end thou hast made them bitter with the sea;
Thou hast fed one rose with dust of many men,
Thou hast marred one face with fire of many tears;
Thou hast taken love and given us sorrow again;
With pain thou hast filled us full to the eyes and ears."

Matthew Arnold, despite all his antique coldness and severity, shows us his heart's wounds when he sings:

"Joy comes and goes, hope ebbs and flows
Like the wave,
Change doth unknit the tranquil strength of men,
Love lends life a little grace,
A few sad smiles, and then
Both are laid in one cold place,
In the grave.

"Dreams dawn and fly, friends smile and die
Like spring flowers,
Our vaunted life is one long funeral,
Men dig graves with bitter tears
For their dead hopes, and all
Mazed with doubts and sick with fears,
Count the hours."

Such dreary words could come only from a heart whose gloomy portals had echoed to the heavy tread of those who bore dead faith away. It is as if the gates of the nether world were opened and we were breathed upon by the chilling winds that rush out from their wanderings in the Fields of Death.

Arnold had lost his Christ, and with Him the key to life's sane interpretation. The Syrian stars look down upon his Lord, dead, a little heap of ashes, a pathetic memory, and with words bitterer than the salt of the sea he flings out his defiance and his passionate pain. And Arnold is the magnificent representative of a great host who swept from their faith-moorings, helpless and unhelping,

adrift on the sorrowful sea, freight the winds with their moans, and who

“Out of the night that covers them,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,”

lift up their thin and quavering voices and pierce our hearts with their spectral cries. A ground tone of agony sobs through all life's music. The eternal miserere laps us with its bitter waves.

“The sky leans dumb on the sea
A-weary with all its wings,
And oh! the song the sea sings
Is dark everlastingly.”

This is ever the cry of unbelief. These are the weeds that grow upon faith's grave. The only rational interpretation of the universe is the Christian interpretation, and when men give this up they have lost the clew to the windings of earth's labyrinth and are doomed to grope unavailingly forever in its gloom. Christianity has a light to cast upon this mystery of being, and when men close their eyes against this light they must pay a heavy penalty. Skepticism leads us truly to no *Civitas Dei*, but to “the City of Dreadful Night.” Unbelief is the capital of Pessimism.

Another cause may be mentioned: the world's sorrow even from the standpoint of the Christian. There is much in life to sadden and dishearten. The inequalities of life distress us. There seems to be no wise love superintending and directing the

affairs of life, giving to all a place at life's full tables. The few are surfeited with dainties, many go hungry. The few live in palaces, many have no homes. The poor lives in comfort and ease, the cultured woman's hands are worn with toil. The sharp contrasts between the rich and poor, the capriciousness of fortune, the prosperity of the unworthy, the adversity coming to the worthy, the unequal awards—these give pain.

Great and sudden calamities, too, oppress us. They strike, or seem to strike, at the goodness of God. A ship goes down at sea with all its precious human freight; a mine explosion sends hundreds of brave men to their death; a cloudburst sweeps away a village; a pestilence scourges a land; a famine comes up to curse, sparing neither the mother nor the hungry child tugging at her breast, and when the fullness of the tragedy bursts upon us we are overwhelmed with grief and awful questionings of the heart. Is it true, in those heavy hours of revelation, we ask ourselves, that the God of Israel slumbereth not but watcheth ever? Is it true that *He* cares? Is it true, this idyll of tenderness, that no sparrow falleth to the ground without His knowledge? The Nazarene said that God was a father, that as earthly parents gave good gifts, so would He give good gifts to His children: bread, not poison; fishes, not stone; but are these fishes, this bread, these good gifts, in

famine, earthquake shocks, devouring floods, relentless flames, merciless diseases? Are these sent in answer to our prayers? Are these a father's blessings? Oh! is there any One at all up yonder in the Heavens, and if there be is He not like Baal's gods, walking or talking, or on a journey, or peradventure sleeping and needing to be waked? Is not either His power or His goodness limited? If all-good, why does He afflict us so? Almost in frenzy these tumultuous questionings overwhelm us. We question, and are dumb.

And not only do the great tragedies fling their shadows across our paths, but the everyday weariness and sadness and unutterable anguish of the world weigh us down. There is no use to deny it; there is much of sorrow, much of suffering in the world. Grief makes all men kin. There is a brotherhood of pain. The Eastern story of the peasant mother who is promised life to her child if only she can beg a tola seed from a home that has known no sorrow, a home stranger to sickness and death, and who in anguished life pilgrimage finds not the boon she seeks, all doors at which she knocks having opened, alas! before her coming to pain, is true everywhere and always. "Has sorrow entered here?" Yea and yea.

Death pains us also—coming to those we love. This sorrow o'ertops all others. This gives life its most somber colorings. We are at the mercy

of the enemy, and the ages whisper that the enemy has no mercy. No art, no toil, can fend us against the common foe. The flock cannot be sheltered. These whom we love go, and in their going ours is a thousand deaths. In a stimulative little book, "Earth's Enigmas," by Mr. C. D. Roberts, this truth is pointed by an artless story of early Canadian life. A young English soldier and his betrothed have wandered away from the sheltering fort. They talk of love. As he stoops to kiss her, he is seized from behind, bound, gagged. She shares the same fate. They are taken to the seashore, knowing not what is to befall them. Stakes are driven securely in the sand within the reach of the incoming tide. Then their hearts sink as the horrible end is disclosed. They are bound to the stakes, and with numb hearts await the incoming tide with its thunderous roar. But that is not all. With diabolical malignity the savages have driven the stake to which the girl is bound on a higher level than that to which her lover is pinioned. The waves will reach him first. Here is the refinement of torture. Not only must she die, but she must watch the horror of waters closing over him she loves. This is the lowest hell. Death triumphs when he snatches our hearts' loves from us.

Poverty, the inequalities of life, great calamities, the weariness and smart and sorrow of all earth-lives, these constitute the soil in which pessimism roots itself, even in a Christian's heart.

"The first lesson in history is the good of evil."—Emerson.

**"I feel the earth move sunward
I join the great march onward
And take by faith while living,
My freehold of thanksgiving."**

"World weariness and self-disgust, the hopelessness of an Ecclesiastes in the contemplation of 'all the evils done under the sun,' the despair of an Obermann, who finds that the heart of a man is a 'gulf in which the void always returns' and that all finite satisfactions in the expressive phrase of Goethe are 'corrupted ere they are broken from the tree'—these are the natural fruits of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Now these wounds of reflection can only be healed by a deeper reflection. As the paralysis of skepticism can be removed only by the philosophy which detects a principle of truth that is deeper than any possible doubt, so the despair of pessimism can be repelled only by the insight which detects 'a soul of goodness in things evil. The power of the teaching of Christ lies in this.'"

"The Evolution of Religion," Caird, p. 107.

VI

PESSIMISM (Continued)

In the preceding chapter the attempt has been made to set forth the leading causes of latter-day pessimism, not with fullness, but with fairness.

There has been no disposition to understate the case nor to belittle origins. Whatever the failings of the sketch, there is at least no justification of Emerson's taunt that we do not paint the devil as black as he is for fear of falling in our own paint-pots. The devil has been painted black.

The shadows and the thorns are here, and are recognized. It is not contended that the serpent has not crawled into our Eden. The contention is that it is an Eden despite the serpent. The optimist does not close his eyes to the spots on the sun, but he insists that the sun is not all spots. He weeps, like the Master, at the grave, but is also at the marriage feast. He hears the cry of pain, but he hears also the rippling laughter of children. He is not blind to the wart on Cromwell's face, but he modestly affirms that the wart is not all. He has felt the ice-breath of the enemy Death, but he believes also in Life. He hears the pessimist out,

and then lugs in the Scotch verdict, "Not proven." He insists that the gloom of occasional moods be not the interpreter of human life. What, then, shall we say of this gospel of darkness?

For one word, this: it exaggerates the pain of the universe. It overstates the world's sorrows; it understates its joy. The pessimist ignores in his argument many of the ordinary sources of human happiness. In his anxiety to prove, with Leopardi, that the "world is a formidable desert," he overlooks many a well-spring of joy. And if happinesses are recognized, they are depreciated. The argument is that men are even more wretched than they think they are.

In the uncanny wish to prove their thesis, eyes are closed, as has been stated, to the commonest and most widely diffused blessings of life.

Pessimism makes no account of world beauty, world glory. Earth's tender skies, fruitful valleys, resounding seas, morning freshnesses, evening stillnesses, scents of meadows and songs of birds are as nothing to our mental dyspeptic. He cares not for these. For him there is no entrancing mystery gathering round the high mountain, no music in the waterfall, no hint of love in flower or star. It is all in vain that for him snow crystals build up their wondrous piles, that clouds are mantled with crimson and scarlet, that trees wave their banners of green, that plains break into

the tumultuous beauty of flowers. In a world of beauty he has no eyes; in a world of melody he has no ears. Earth's stupendous miracles he regards not, nor all its sweet surprises. He holds the world common and cheap, its beauties as worthless things. Nor does physical life, life as life, appeal to him. The joys of the senses are cheats. Of the sensuous happiness of the Greeks he knows nothing. To be open to all that flows in upon him through the senses exalting, enrapturing, entrancing, is nothing. His is ever the Oriental refrain, Life is a burden. How he needs the mental tonic of Browning, how does his blood need to be quickened by the buoyant words in "Saul":

"Oh, our manhood's prime vigor! No spirit feels waste,
Not a muscle is stopped in its playing nor sinew unbraced,
Oh, the wild joys of living! the leaping from rock up to rock,
The strong rending of boughs from the fir tree, the cool
silver shock

Of the plunge in the pool's living water, the hunt of the bear,
And the sultriness showing the lion is couched in his lair.

How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses forever in joy."

And the words exalting physical life in Rabbi Ben Ezra:

"Let us not always say
'Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!'
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry, 'All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh
helps soul.'"

Pessimism ignores the happiness that comes through the companionship of books. And how much is thereby ignored! What happiness, solid and enduring is here. Montaigne reckoning the three great "commerces" of life, places as highest of all this dear companionship. Sometimes Lamb's delicate whimsicalities escape us, but what book-lover has not sympathized with him when he says, "I always feel more like saying grace when I sit down to read a book than when I sit down to dinner." And say grace, though inaudibly, we do when we sit down to these feasts of mind and soul. How our loneliness is cheered! How our melancholy is driven away! How our poverty is forgotten! How, steeped in this glorious absinthe, is pain banished! How great our exaltation when the immortals tell us of "the things that stormed upon them and surged through their souls in mighty tides, entrancing them with matchless music." How pure the joy when, with blessed unconstraint, we are invited to share the heart confidences in the classics that will never die. We are transformed. The earth is transfigured—lo! constellations glitter in the blue.

Pessimism leaves out of its reckonings the joys of friendship. The "master passion," with its hand-grasps, heart-clasps, its mutual confidences, its splendid sacrifices, its deathless deeds, its words that linger as music in the air forever, this our pur-

blind philosophers deem not worthy even of mention.

But there is no need to prolong this list of omissions. Read that most inspiring little book of Lubbock's on "The Pleasures of Life"—the pleasures of books, of home, of travel, of love, and see how much this philosophy leaves out. Pessimism has fenced out infinitely more than it has fenced in. A million worlds could be constructed out of the materials this philosophy does not see. Many and varied are the sources of happiness, and the concrete expressions of that happiness meet us everywhere. The world is not so wretched as it is declared. Your *L'Allegro* is the normal note of life. There is more of joy than sorrow in the world. There are more days of sunshine than days of cloud. There is more of health than disease. There are more with eyes than those who cannot see. Where there is one hunchback there are a thousand who stand erect. Goodness, health, happiness, these are the common and familiar. Badness, sickness, sorrow, these are the unexpected and exceptional. And these abnormalities make irruptions into our talk. To say that a man is honest is to startle no one; to say that he is a scoundrel is "news." Health is so universal that we never speak of it; We only break silence to say, "I am sick." Smiles excite no comment; tears are food for wonder. There are a thousand

holes in the sky through which streams the eternal goodness, if only we have eyes to see.

Pessimism misstates the facts of life. In Goethe's "Faust" Mephistopheles, in daring colloquy with the Almighty, declares that in going up and down the earth he had seen only wretchedness, and that—

"Man's evils from my heart I do deplore
That even I would not torment them more."

But these, remember, are Mephistophelian words, and the devil is ever the father of lies.

Sorrow there is in the world, and we do not blink it, but to give it the commanding place in human life is to falsify the commonest facts of life. It may even be suspected that our professional pessimist gets a good deal of happiness out of the very attempt to prove that he is altogether miserable. We may ask him, with a shrewd critic, if he is not exceedingly pleased with himself when he has set forth in a convincing style the general depravity and lack of reason in the world and in life. "He may jump up from his writing-table and run to embrace his wife in delight if some page in his dissertation has turned out an especially deep black."

And now, having shown how pleasurably a man may theoretically damn himself, let our philosopher take the yardstick with which he has been measuring earth's sorrows, and measure also its joys. If he moans over the cripple, let him rejoice with

the thousands who walk without a crutch. If the hospital wards give him pain, let him remember that where one languishes in a hospital hundreds are in health. If he has eyes for the joys that have flown, let him gaze upon forest songsters shaking even now from their little throats notes melodic and sweet. If he is touched by the sight of Milton, blind, moaning that never more to him again will come the seasons' changing beauties and the sweet approach of morn and eve, let him rejoice with the millions who gaze upon these miracles of beauty. If you must think of the one with the Damoclean sword above him, think of earth's myriads who, looking up, see only the sky. Your Laocoon and the vulture gnawing at his heart are spectacular successes, and can be effectively used in your occasional "big bow-wow" deliverances, but for mercy's sake do not tell us that every little hill is a Caucasus, cursed with a man who, consumed, can never die, nor that the bird that sang in the garden yesterday will be feeding on my liver to-morrow. It is all very well for Gwinplaine, the child lost in the night, to be terrorized by the swinging gibbet against which he stumbles, but pray do not, most sapient friend, tell me that every tree is a gibbet, and that all life's music is the creaking of the chains by which the fleshless body of the malefactor is suspended, the sport of the pitiless winds. If you must uncover

the sewer, at least do not pour its defilements over our lawns. Do not be quite so tragical. Stop posing, and see the world as it is. Now that you have exhibited your skull and crossbones, be content to take a little journey in the world, and be honest reporter rather than jaundiced philosopher.

Along with this understatement of the happiness of the world is its correlative blunder, the exaggeration of its pain. Not only do we miss the ecstasy, but we are plunged ever into the agony of life. Hear Schopenhauer:

"We are like lambs in a field, disporting themselves under the eye of the butcher who chooses out first one then another for his prey." "If, finally, all the terrible pains and sorrows to which life is ever exposed could be brought before the eyes of each he would be seized with horror, and if the most obstinate of optimists were led through the prisons, torture chambers and slaveholds, over the fields of battle and places of execution; if then those dark abodes of misery where it creeps out of the view of cold curiosity were opened to him; and finally a sight were afforded him of the starvation of some Ugolino—he would surely at last perceive what kind of *meilleur des mondes possible* this is."

Very likely, indeed, if we should spend all our lives looking at these things and were taught that these constituted the whole of life. But will our pessimists never learn that these are the exceptional phases of life, and that the world has much else besides battlefields, torture-chambers, and lazar-houses? What a strange perversity and what

absurd logic to hold the microscope forever over the boil, and to insist that the boil represents man and the universe begirting him, mindless of flower and sky. The garbage can is not the ocean.

Equally misleading is another figure: "The pleasure in this world, it has been said, outweighs the pain; or at any rate, there is an even balance between the two. If the reader wishes to see shortly whether this statement is true, let him compare the respective feelings of two animals, one of which is engaged in eating the other." Cleverly turned and unanswerable, if the analogy held good. But human life cannot be expressed in this simile, nor can happiness be eaten up by a trope. It would be easy to pull the teeth of this figure; it is still easier, however, to get out of the monster's way. The only place where this rhetorical megalosaurus can breathe and crawl is in the distempered marshes of Schopenhauer's mind. We should thank him, however, to keep his dinosaurian menagerie locked up. We are not afraid of being eaten, but we do not relish the sight of these slobberers of the slime.

If it be thought an impertinence to speak so lightly of this heavy German and his system, one may be permitted to shield himself behind an authority not often questioned. Says Mr. Huxley: "If the optimism of Leibnitz is a foolish though pleasant dream, the pessimism of Schopenhauer is

a nightmare, the more foolish because of its hideousness. Error which is not pleasant is surely the worst form of wrong. This may not be the best of all possible worlds, but to say that it is the worst is mere petulant nonsense. A worn-out voluptuary may find nothing good under the sun; a vain and inexperienced youth who cannot get the moon he cries for may vent his irritation in pessimistic moanings; but there can be no doubt in the mind of any reasonable person that mankind could get on with vastly less happiness and with far more misery than find their way into the lives of nine persons out of ten. Men with any manhood in them would find life worth living under far worse conditions than the present."

Huxley is right. If it were not so, the race would seek speedily an end to its sufferings in suicide. If life brought more of pain than pleasure, the world would quit it. Certainly, the many who are not in any way controlled by religious motives would make right speedily their exit from this world if it were the inferno it is pictured. The pessimist is the eulogist of suicide. Schopenhauer quotes approvingly these words from Pliny: "The chief of all remedies for a troubled mind is the feeling that among the blessings nature gives to man there is none greater than an opportune death; the best of it is that every one can avail himself of it. Herein is man more to be envied than God. Not even to

God are all things possible; for He could not compass His own death if He willed to die, and yet in all the miseries of our earthly life this is the best of His gifts to man." Our gloomy German lauds, too, the Chinese play, "L'Orphelin de la Chine," in which all the noble characters commit suicide. But however praised and however theoretically valued, suicide has few charms for the majority of men, and the tenacity with which they cling to life when so easily they might quit it is proof conclusive that it is not so intolerable as pessimism would have us believe. All funereal philosophers to the contrary notwithstanding, few there are who will imitate the Chinamen in the play.

Pessimism fails again and utterly to understand the mission of suffering. Perhaps it does not try. Sorrow there is in the world, and pain. The optimist and the pessimist alike see this. But they are one only in this recognition. The former seeks for an explanation, and believes that he has found it; the latter assumes that it is an evil unredeemed, and instead of investigating the matter, gives himself to plaintive cries. For searching he substitutes wailing. And here is his colossal blunder. Even more irrational than his overestimate of the world's sorrow is this failure to see the beneficence of its ministry. On Voltaire's tomb is inscribed, "If there were no God, it would be necessary to invent one." So we may say of pain. If

there were no suffering in the world, it would be necessary to invent it.

Pain is a sentinel. It gives the warning cry. It tells us of the enemy's approach. Without bodily pain we should soon be bodily wrecks. If it did not hurt him to do so, a boy would carve his body into a totem pole. The blistering tells us that the fire is near. That irritating grain of sand in the eye would ruin your vision if there were no pain to warn you of its presence. And pain does sentinel work not only for the body, but for the mind and soul, saving all.

Pain is a schoolmaster. It educates us. Without its ministry our learning would be but slight. Into all the deeper meanings of life and love, of dream and deed, of duty and of destiny, it leads us. Here is the world university. Here or nowhere can we learn.

Pain chastens, ennobles, glorifies. It redeems us from the commonplace. It is our salvation from ourselves. It cleanses. Neither the waters of the Abana and the Pharpa, nor yet the sacred Jordan can so purify as the waters of the river Sorrowful. The bruised flower gives forth its fragrance. Beautiful faces have been chiseled so by pain. One man was made a painter because his mother smiled upon him; most men succeed because their hearts are broken. Words that live are written in blood.

"This life is one; and in its warp and woof
There runs a thread of gold that glitters fair,
And sometimes in the pattern shows most sweet
Where there are somber colors."

The "somber colors" tell. The Memnon statue sings when touched by the beams of the rising sun, but life's sweetest songs are of the night. There are blessings in the clouds.

"Is it raining, little flower?
Be glad of rain.
Too much sun would wither thee;
'Twill shine again.
The sky is very black 'tis true,
But just behind it shines the blue."

But the pessimist sees nothing but evil in the cloud, the night, the somber color, the chisel touching the heart. He fashions an ideal of life sensuous, material, and buffets as messengers of evil these ministers who would save him from himself. Having decided that suffering is ever the world's enemy, he tracks it not in its holy mission nor listens to its defense. Having eyes to see, he sees not; having ears to hear, he hears not. If only having lips he would not speak, better would it be for the world's content.

Let us remember, however, that these mournful voices are, after all, only the minor voices of our times. The really great minds of our day have not yielded to this disease. Tall men see beyond the valley. It is to intellectual weaklings

that this gospel of gloom has been committed. In its apostolate there is place only for the mediocre. The commanding geniuses of our times have bravely battled and bravely sung, and will leave behind them only deeds and words of cheer. Only the weak are faint-hearted. They who dwell on the real Olympus see the clouds, but mind them not, rejoicing in the sun. Not one amongst the first-class thinkers of our day is to be numbered with the pessimists. Take three of our greatest poets as representatives: Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning. Of all the voices of the century these will carry farthest. Select spirits such as these must keep company with the immortals. And what say these deep-seeing ones, as in melodious verses they sing to us of life and love and the vast forever stretching ever on? Is it a battle-cry or a dirge, a message of cheer or a wailing cry?

Call Wordsworth. From the mountain height of earnest contemplation what sees this prophet of the invisible? This:

“The chasm of sky above my head
To heaven's profoundest azure; no domain
For fickle, short-lived clouds to occupy
Or to pass though; but rather an abyss
Wherein the everlasting stars abide.”

All is well, here and there. The stars abide. And this undisturbed repose, this delicious calm, is Wordsworth's constant mood. We are not alone in the world. Not only at times do we “catch

sight of that immortal sea that brought us hither,"
but with—

"An eye made quiet with the power
Of harmony—the deep power of joy
We see into the life of things."

And the life of things is good.

Turn to England's poet laureate, the immortal Tennyson. What message sings through all his melting music? The message of cheer. His are the poems of triumph. He sees the evil in the world, feels the darkness here, but sees and feels but to despise. He dares to hope. Darkness is here, yet—

"Out of darkness come the hands,
That reach through nature molding men."

Tennyson is no stoic. He is a lover, and, loving, enters into the world's sufferings. His identification with it is complete. The yew-tree, with its "thousand years of gloom," stands for the world's sorrows, and yet gazing on this "sullen tree," he seems to—

"Fail from out my blood
And grow incorporate with thee."

The world's griefs are his own. Its arrows reach his heart, and yet he loses not his faith through sorest anguish.

"O yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sin of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void
When God hath made the pile complete."

Listen to but one other voice, Robert Browning's. Here is tonic for us all. Sometimes Tennyson drops into the minor key, but Browning never. His philosophy is of sunbeams. He knows only of victory. His is the contagion of perfect sanity, perfect health. All is good. Even evil has its mission.

"Then welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough
Each sting that bids not sit, nor stand, but go!
Be one joy these parts pain
Strive and hold cheap the strain;
Learn nor account the pang; dare never grudge the throe."

His ideal is no sniveler, but—

"One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed though right were worsted wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better
Sleep to awake."

This ideal he realized in his own living.

"My own hope is, a sun will pierce
The thickest cloud earth ever stretched;
That after last returns the first,
Though a wide compass round be fetched,
That what began best can't end worst,
Nor what God blessed once prove accurst."

And again:

"I find earth not gray, but rosy,
Heaven not grim, but fair of hue;
Do I stoop? I pluck a posy;
Do I stand and stare? All's blue."

One can but wish that more and more the age shall turn to these virile and inspirational words of the great master, and learn how, even in its sorrows, to sing with Pippa:

"God's in his heaven,
All's right with the world."

"If the world with all its myriad wonders will not touch them, if through the veils of all its transparent forms they cannot see the face of God flashing—neither will they believe though one rose from the dead."

"The Religion of a Literary Man," Le Gallienne, p. 13.

"But if belief in God be in harmony with reason, the belief in revelation cannot be contrary to it; nay, the real contradiction would be disbelief. Agnosticism assumes a double incompetence—the incompetence not only of man to know God, but of God to make himself known. But the denial of competence is the negation of deity. For the God who could not speak would not be rational, and the God who would not speak could not be moral; and so if deity be at once intelligent and moral there must be some kind or form of revelation."

"The Place of Christ in Modern Theology," Fairbairn, p. 387.

"In the midway of this our mortal life,
I found me in a gloomy wood astray
Gone from the path direct; and e'en to tell,
It were no easy task, how savage wild,
That forest, how robust and rough its growth,
Which to remember only, my dismay
Renews in bitterness not far from death."

Inferno, Canto I, opening lines.

VII

AGNOSTICISM

Agnosticism is the apotheosis of ignorance. That one should be an agnostic—that is, one who says, “I do not know”—is not unbelievable; but that he should be proud of this darkness, should rejoice in this limitation, should deify this blindness, is passing strange.

And yet this wonder is before us. Men no longer say, “There is no God.” Atheism is altogether out of fashion. Denial is obsolete. But men are saying nowadays—the message came from Germany, and has received large emphasis by an influential school of English scientists—“If there is a God, we do not know anything about Him; He is far beyond us; to strive to know Him is folly; let us see to it that we raise a good crop of potatoes.” Now, the potato is a most excellent vegetable and wellnigh indispensable, but one may be pardoned for believing that there are other interests quite as important as the potato interest; that this cavalier disposition of theology, this having done with all concern as to the infinite, this flippant declaration of divorce between a knowledge of God and the

practical matters of life, this turning away without a sigh from world-old quests and heart-deep longings, is not the act of highest wisdom, and that the second step in this folly—the deification of these limitations, the worship of a blank, the enthronement of a negation—is no cause for gratulation, but the rather for tears.

Yet we know the ways in which this ism has been ushered in, the causes of its being. For one thing, it has come through the revelations of science in these latter days. Science has exhibited the material world in all its splendor; has shown us the laws that control it; has with microscope and telescope revealed at once the worlds beneath and the worlds around us; has pictured the evolutions of plant and man through countless centuries—the splendid march of life; and we are dazed for the moment with its revelations, forgetting that these laws of which we are told are but the expression of the infinite; touching only the material, immersed only in this sense-world, we have wondered if this, which is so much, is not indeed all. Through this emphasis of the material we lose for a moment the wider vision and the diviner song.

Again, agnosticism in religion comes through the iconoclasm of the age. Nothing is secure. All things are in a state of flux. The passing of the institution of slavery, the casting out of the divine right of kings, the overturning of ancient

philosophies and sciences, the changing of customs, the shaking of laws — this whirl kaleidoscopic troubles us, and we wonder, when the very earth beneath us reels, if even our faith in God will abide. With some it does not abide.

Then, too, we may seek for an explanation of this pyrrhonism in the rebound from an over-familiarity with God, an assumed infallibility and knowledge concerning Him. The theologians of the past were dogmatists, often without knowledge. What God did before worlds began, what disposition He had made of the race, what His thoughts as to all the untraveled ways beyond, they knew. They had an accurate inventory of all the divine attributes. God was to them a well-known country, with whose every path they were familiar. Jehovah could be put into a creed. The All-Father could be accurately and fully expressed in a system. Now it is from this pretentious dogmatism, this cock-sure all-knowingness, from which in vigorous rebound men find themselves in the slough of the agnostic.

But however the way into the slough—for slough it is—many have plunged therein. Let us note the weaknesses of this gospel.

To begin, the very assumption of the agnostic that there can be a God who yet conceals Himself seems monstrous. Can God keep in hiding? Can the Infinite be forever unrevealed? In this world

132 Some Latter-Day Religions

of disclosures, where not even an atom can keep its secrets, can God remain unknown? If so gross a thing as matter can be known, can so fine a thing as spirit lie forever in the darkness?

For what is God? If Mr. Arnold's famous definition be accepted, "A power not ourselves making for righteousness," is concealment possible? Can a "power" remain unknown? Will not the something that "makes for righteousness" be disclosed in its very workings?

"God is thought." Very well. Can a thought be long closeted? If a thinker is born, in Europe, in Australia, in South Sea islands, will not the world find it out? Emerson thought so. He held that a real thinker let loose on the world will excite a wondrous commotion. If Lotze, if Pascal, if Kant, cannot be concealed, can it be that the primal thinker, we whose highest attainments are realized in thinking His thoughts over again, that He cannot be known? God is a creator. Can a creator hide himself? Here is Milton creating an epic. Here is Plato creating a philosophy. Here is Darwin creating a science. Can these create and yet be unrevealed?

God is morality. If there is a God, He possesses moral attributes—justice, truth, sympathy, love—virtues which we, at our best but faintly reflect. Can these glories hide themselves? Is not truth evangelistic? Is not sympathy self-dis-

closing? Is not love communicative? Thought, will, intelligence, creative activities, love—these cannot be hid.

Again the agnostic errs in saying that because of the "relativity of knowledge" we may not know God. By this he means that we cannot understand anything to which we are not related in some way; that through relationship knowledge is born. God, he declares, if there be a God, differs from us not only in degree, but in kind. We have nothing in common with Him. We are altogether unrelated to Him; therefore cannot know Him. The conclusion is logical, but the major premise is wrong. We are not unrelated to God. If we were, then, in truth, we could never know Him. You meet a foreigner—a Russian, say. You do not know his language, he does not know yours. How will you ever come to know him—through his language, which you do not understand? Nay. There is something in common, a universal sign language. Through that, the thing that you hold in common, you can enter into an elementary knowledge of the stranger. To know one another we must meet on a common ground. An angel can reveal himself to me only through my own conceptions, experiences, life. If, then, God were altogether unrelated to man, the agnostic's contention would be true.

But God is related to us. God is intelligence. God is will. God is creator. God is morality.

And to these we are related. These attributes in some poor way we comprehend. "Ah, but," we hear, "your knowledge of these is only finite; God must possess them in an infinite degree, and is therefore unknowable." Well, let not the word "infinite" terrorize us. The infinite is but the finite with the roof off. Infinity in numbers is but a procession of the figure "1" stretching out of sight. The shoreless sea is made up of drops, one of which I caught on my ulster. Space is infinite, and yet it is but the endless multiplications of the length of my thumb.

Time is infinite, yet it is but the shadowy march never ending of the little second in which you breathe. Infinite—these? Yes, and still a little do we know of the number one and the salt drop, the length of the thumb and the second ticked off. Multiply intelligence by all the stars, and still somewhat of it we may understand. Let the human will, weak as the reed, pass into the divine will, strong as the mountain, still it is will. Let love make its throne in the highest heavens, it is love still, and ever the same.

The agnostic blunders again in the assumption that God is altogether unknowable because not fully comprehensible. The logic is wretchedly faulty. We do not proclaim unknowableness of matter, and yet it is confessedly incomprehensible in its final analysis, beginning and ending in mys-

tery. We are accustomed to speak of it as elementary and simple, but it is not so. For what is matter? A something, we are told, that has extension, movableness, and impenetrability. To be matter it must take some room in space, must be capable of being moved from one place to another, and while it is in that place the place cannot be occupied by something else. *It?* Then extension, movableness, and impenetrability do not stand for matter, but only for certain properties of matter. What is this mysterious *it?* You do not know. You hold a dollar gold-piece in your hand. How is *it* known to us? It has malleability, weight, fusibility, color, stamp. *They?* No, *it*. *It* manifests itself in this way. These properties inhere in the dollar, but the dollar is not these properties. It is it. Ah, how baffling even the simplest thing! How incomprehensible in its furthest reaches, and yet agnosticisms are cherished because of our inability to get to the core of all mystery. Yet this ignorance of ultimate truth does not seriously embarrass us in the ordinary vocations of life. We know not all the mysterious properties of a piece of iron, or an egg, and yet this ignorance does not prevent us from hammering the iron into a horseshoe, or from putting the egg beneath the mother hen, that she may hatch a chick.

The agnostic says we know nothing of God, be-

cause if there be a God, and therefore infinite, His nature must be beyond the comprehension of the finite.

Granting that the infinite must ever stretch away beyond the full comprehension of the finite, does it therefore follow that it may not be known at all? No man knows his friend, knows him altogether; will he therefore thrust him into the shadow-world of the unknowable? No man knows himself in all His potentialities, heights, and dismal abysses; is he therefore to build an altar to the unknowable self? This logic applied to the ordinary affairs of life would land us in universal pyrrhonism. This has been most acutely pointed out by Mr. Balfour in "The Foundations of Belief." Speaking of Mr. Spencer's contention that all ultimate theological ideas are "unthinkable," Mr. Balfour holds that, if so, ultimate scientific ideas are also unthinkable. If the one is intelligible, so also is the other. "In order to prove this," he continues, "we need not travel beyond the ample limits of Mr. Spencer's own philosophy. To be sure, he obstinately shuts his ears against speculative doubts respecting the conclusions of science. 'To ask whether science is substantially true is,' he observes, 'much like asking whether the sun gives light.' But, then, on Mr. Spencer's principles, does the sun give light? After due consideration we shall have to admit, I think, that

it does not. For it is a statement which if made intelligently, not only involves the comprehension of matter, space, time, and force, which are, according to Mr. Spencer, all incomprehensible, but there is the further difficulty that if his system is to be believed, 'what we are conscious of as properties of matter, even down to weight and resistance, are but subjective affections, produced by objective agencies which are unknown and unknowable.' It would seem, therefore, that either the sun is a 'subjective affection,' in which case it can hardly be said to 'give light,' or it is 'unknown' and 'unknowable'; in which case no assertion respecting it can be regarded as supplying us with any very flattering specimen of scientific certitude." No wonder that Mr. Balfour declares such reasoning carries "universal skepticism in its train."

Agnosticism is vulnerable in that it makes its own observations and experiences the sole standard by which all phenomena in the world of religion are to be tried. That this method is provincial, unphilosophical, cannot be denied. The agnostic has never known God, therefore he declares God is unknowable. A South Sea Islander has never seen the snow; therefore there is no snow. Darwin had no appreciation of music; therefore there is no witchery of harmony. Madame de Stael saw nothing attractive in nature, and would not

open her window to catch a glimpse of the waters of Lucerne or the white glory of Mount Pilatus; therefore there is no beauty in the Swiss lake, nor grandeur in the stately Alpine peak! As if there were not a world beyond the individual experience and beyond the purview of even the collective wisdom of an agnostic group!

Agnosticism should be regarded as a soul deformity and cause for tears. It is in this spirit that a young student in a German university writes: "If a God exists, He wraps Himself in darkness; if He exists, He folds Himself in silence. Leaning as it were over the edge of being, men strive to pierce the abyss of the unknown; above, below, they strain their sight, but they see nothing; they listen, but nothing strikes their ear. Weary, dizzy, they stagger backward, and with the darkness pressing on their eyeballs, murmur, 'God'." Despite this Jean Paul histrionism, the cry seems real, and we understand and pity. Agnosticism can be uttered as a moan, but to put it forth in reasoned propositions, declaring God's unknowableness, because contrary to the experiences and observations of a small cult, is, to say the least, not overly modest. And yet it lacks in modesty no more than in logic.

It is the day before Christmas. You are strolling along the streets, filling to the brim your cup of pleasure by the sight of children's happy faces and

the rippling music of their laughter. It is a day of mirth. Parental faces glisten with the anticipation of the surprises they will give their little ones. The shop windows smile at the passers-by, who smile back in turn at the windows. A radiancy of outlook, a warmth suffusing everything, the glow of expectancy, an atmosphere electrical with joy—this is our day. A harsh sound falls upon your ear, and a piteous spectacle is before you—a blind man, with a cane, a dog, a string. The little dog threads his way through the throng, and the old man, sharply striking the street with his cane, passes on. You pity him. You give him alms. The man is blind, and you grieve that he must miss this gladness.

But suppose that old man should turn philosopher; suppose that he should declare that all these glad faces and festal arrays are but the disorders of your mind; that *he* does not see them; that no glory looks out of children's faces upon *him*; that all this panoramic miracle is but an idle dream; that there are only three verities in the world—the street on which he walks, the dog that leads him, the string in his hand. Poor philosopher! And yet no poorer than the agnostic, who, confessedly blind, turns his sightless eyes toward the heavens, and, seeing nothing, proclaims it empty, pitying all those who talk of angel faces, quite sure that all that is real is the earth, the dog, the string.

Agnosticism errs in that it takes no account of the faith faculty in the souls of men. Now, Max Müller contends that man has an immediate perception of God. Müller's scientific conception is worked out in popular form by Dr. John Watson in his essay on "Faith as a Sixth Sense." But agnosticism ignores this sense altogether. Man is pictured, not as looking up through faith to the heavens, to the unseen helper, but out of the very plenitude of his power creating that helper. God does not create man, man creates God. Thus Professor Clifford: "A helper of men outside of humanity the truth will not allow us to see. The dim and shadowy outlines of the superhuman deity fade slowly away from us, and as the mist of His presence floats aside, we perceive with greater and greater clearness the shape of a yet grander and nobler figure of Him who made all gods and shall unmake them." But flatly against this Philistine's denial of God is Müller's contention that by the faith organ, an organ as real as the organ of sight, man has knowledge of God. This philosophy, however, has received but slight consideration at the agnostic's hands. These grave affirmations are dismissed most cavalierly by Professor Huxley and his school as being but worthless guesses.

Agnosticism pales before the faith that like a sun has shone in many a life. This ism seems impertinent in its speech, when ringing in our ears

are the voices of earth's greatest, voices all of faith. These voices should count for something, should count for much. Let us hear them. One is the voice of the great Webster, he of whom an English critic said that no man could ever be as great as Webster looked. To the very forefront of the world's orators and statesmen will ever be this great "Defender of the Constitution." Did logic drive this giant thinker to agnosticism? Nay. Doubts he had, but, like Tennyson, he met and fought them, and after the battle could say in the words inscribed upon his tombstone at Marshfield: "My heart assures me that the gospel of Jesus Christ must be a divine reality." Huxley sneers at faith as but idle guessing at matters "as unknowable as the politics of the inhabitants of the moon"; but this American Burke, at the death of his son Edward, says: "I feel at this hour that all that gives dignity and glory to man is contained in the religion of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, and I could wish that on my tombstone, after the dates of my birth and death, there might be simply this inscription: 'He was a believer in the gospel of Jesus Christ, the best thing that can be said of any man.' "

The voices of scientists come to us, voices of faith. Not all scientists are agnostics. The great Newton was not a religious know-nothing; nor Kepler, who, looking at the stars, cried, "O God, I

read Thy thoughts after Thee''; nor Agassiz, who, at the opening of his school of natural history, lifts his hat, gravely saying, "Gentlemen, let us pray"; nor—look but at the names in that shining list—Leconte, Silliman, Dana, Evans, Champollion, Mivart, Maxwell, Lord Kelvin. These were all heroes of faith, and ever in Pauline way cried, "For we know." How chaffy and thin seem the voices of the agnostics while these deep-toned notes of faith ravish our ears.

Nor have the great philosophers felt called upon to embrace agnosticism. Hegel declares that God as spirit is essentially self-manifesting. Emmanuel Kant, greatest of modern thinkers, is to be numbered among the believers. John Stuart Mill not only refuses to accept agnosticism, but most savagely attacks it. "My opinion," he says, "of this doctrine" (namely, that nothing can be known or understood of moral attributes in a supreme being), "in whatever way presented, is that it is simply the most morally pernicious doctrine now current, and that the question it involves is, beyond all others which now engage speculative minds, the decisive one between good and evil in the Christian world."

Most eloquently did Professor Max Müller, in a recent lecture in Glasgow, sum up the case for faith. "We can now repeat," he says, "the words which have been settled for us centuries ago, and

which we learned by heart in childhood, 'I believe in God the Father, maker of heaven and earth,' with a new feeling, with the conviction that they express not only the faith of the apostles or the ecumenical councils, but that they contain the confession of faith of the whole world, expressed in different ways, conveyed in thousands of languages, but always embodying the same fundamental truth, fundamental because founded on the very nature of our mind, our reason, and our language—that where there are children there must be a father; where there are acts there must be agents; and where there are many agents there must be a prime agent whom man may know."

The poets, too, chorus not agnosticism, but faith. True, the minor poets are not robust believers, and sometimes their wings are broken quite. Witness a Swinburne, a Clough, an Arnold; but the great singers, those whose voices carry far—Milton, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning—these in their very weakest moments cry with one—

"I stretch lame hands of faith and grope,
And gather dust and chaff and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope,"

and in their strongest, sing the mighty songs of faith triumphant.

These believe in "God and Truth," in—

"That God which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves."

These believe that

"God's in the heaven,
All's right with the world."

These believe, too, in the bright life which is to
be, and with Browning, cry:

"I shall arrive! what time, what circuit first
I ask not, but unless God send His hail
Or blinding fireballs sleet or stifling snow,
In some time, His good time I shall arrive;
He guides me and the bird. In His good time."

The sea of Faith is not as the agnostics would have
us believe, "retreating," saddening all by

"Its melancholy long withdrawing roar";

but rather is it at fullest flood, and on its waters
we may launch our barks and be borne to the
haven where we would be.

"There is a certain type of man who always thinks it an explanation to point to the root, as if the root was ever any explanation of the flower—and as if roots themselves had not deeper roots, and those roots had not roots again deep in unfathomable eternity."

"Religion of a Literary Man," Le Gallienne, p. 109.

"We do not poise the physical life on the ether. We do not separate it from the physiological life and from the nervous organism necessary to the production of the act as to the production of the thought. Mechanical laws may be accepted as one of the conditions of the higher life without detriment to that higher life, if only it is understood that they are not its cause and that they can be modified in their application.

"A Study of Origins," De Pressense, p. 277.

"As a physiologist I recognize the fact that the physical force exerted by the body of man is not generated *de novo* by his will, but is derived from the oxidation of the constituents of his food. But holding it as equally certain, because the fact is capable of verification by every one as often as he chooses to make the experiment, that in the performance of every volitional movement, that physical force is put in action, directed and controlled by the individual personality or ego. I deem it just as absurd and illogical to affirm that there is no place for a God in nature, originating, directing, and controlling its forces by His will as it would be to assert that there is no place in man's body for his conscious mind."

"Nature and Man," Carpenter, p. 364.

VIII

MATERIALISM

Mr. Huxley somewhere states that if a man were put into a barrel, conveyed to the moon, and there examined by the inhabitants, along with other mammiferous animals and monkeys, that he would no doubt be identified with the monkeys. Concerning which it has been remarked that if such were the case, the inhabitants of that luminary are still in the period of superficial investigation. This skin-deep science of Mr. Huxley's hypothetical sun inhabitants can be found closer home. Materialism has been discarded by the really great thinkers of our time, and yet our nurslings in philosophy seem altogether unaware of the fact; know not that they are worshipping a discredited idol, and that the noise they hear is not the mighty sound of materialism's advancing tides, but the good by of its fast withdrawing waves.

This gospel was startling in its boldness and iconoclastic to the very core. It denied the existence of the soul—the microscope and the scalpel have not found it, gleefully it cried out. It denied the existence of God. We have swept every star

with our telescopes, proclaimed the high priests of this cult, and we have not found God. "There is no God but necessity," affirms Haeckel. Mr. Atkinson, writing to Harriet Martineau, declares that philosophy "finds no God in nature, nor sees the want of any." There is nothing but matter. Says Lefevre: "Hydrogen, oxygen, carbon, etc., are the elements at present recognized as constituting the earth, its products, its inhabitants, and its atmosphere. From the facts thus acquired we draw a conclusion broad enough to comprehend all the partial modifications with which experience has made us acquainted. The things which in their totality are expressed by the word universe are formed of a certain number of known substances, *beyond which there is nothing.*" It is a mournful gospel, cruel, base, and all disheartening, and right glad are we to know of its sure doom. To be told that spirit must abdicate, that matter is all, that man, imperial man, is but the creature of blind forces, that necessity rules over all, that life had its origin in primitive slime, in formless protoplasm, that God has been permanently retired from the universe, and that worship, religion, prayer, is but folly—this is heavy news.

And yet only a few years ago this ism was triumphant. It claimed all things. Haeckel had just discovered the moneron, a body without form, a mere particle of slime, a little mass of albumen,

a bit of protoplasm, in the depth of the sea, and from which, with blare of trumpets, he announced universal life had been derived. Materialism was fairly beside itself. Prospero-like, it waved its wand, and lo! a world was conjured into being. From cosmic vapor in the dateless beginning, through some fortuitous collocation of atoms, some accidental swirl of forces, worlds were formed, and in far-off misty morn wheeled to their places and began their endless rounds. Through happenings of senseless particles, which in some inexplicable way got themselves endowed with all the potency of life, all animated life came. Matter thus mothering man, he is purely material. His intellectual life is contained in three pounds' weight of a fatty and albuminous tissue.

The mind is but a metaphysical abstraction of nervous and cerebral phenomena. Consciousness begins in an annular protuberance. Thought is only a function of the nervous centers. The brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile. Thinking is simply the equivalent of so much brain food. "No phosphorus, no thought." The conscious self is but a "group of psychical states constituting an impulse." Personal identity is only the remembered sensations of a multiple of atoms. Everything is mechanical. The brain is not simply the instrument of the mind, but the mind itself. A thought is as material as a block of wood. Love,

joy, hate, despair, are but the mechanical movements of the molecules of the brain. And these movements are as arbitrary as those which in the shoreless beginning evolved worlds from cosmic vapor. We are bound to the chariot wheels of matter. The scalpel has not discovered the soul. The microscope cannot discover any germ of immortality. The telescope has found no God.

Such were the black wings flapping over us twenty years ago, and such the croaking of this foul bird.

One can but wonder that some slight grace of modesty was not shown by the apostles of this mud religion, in view of the little they knew about what they were pleased to call "matter," and which in their sweeping asseverations included all. Denying all else, were they quite familiar with the contents of this word "matter" which they used so glibly? It may serve to call a halt on such over-impetuous egotisms to remind our adversaries that they know but little about that something "beyond which there is nothing." Le Gallienne surely cannot be charged with any prejudice against this school, and yet most pertinently in his brochure, "The Religion of a Literary Man," he inquires: "For has science actually brought us one step nearer to the primal mystery of things? It has catalogued the minutiae of phenomena; it has numbered the stars; it has counted the grains of sand;

but has it told us a single truth about the essence of these things, the mysterious breath of life which alone gives them significance?" Answers this litterateur, No.

If a heavier shaft is wanted than that sent from this graceful but not overstrong bow, let it come from that profound thinker, De Pressense. In "A Study of Origins" he reminds us that this "matter" which is so indubitable and which is to explain everything "is never directly approached by us, and that we only know it through the sensations which modify it, or rather, that we are only directly certain of the sensation—that is, the fact of our own consciousness." We can never, according to this thinker, know matter at first-hand; we can only know it through the sensations it produces in us.

"The advances of science, too," he continues, "have more and more refined away and idealized the notion of matter. Descartes made it to consist in extension; but no perception of the senses gives us extension. We feel a certain resistance; we can see certain colors, but there is nothing in this to give us the notion of extension. . . . Extension is a conception of our mind, and consequently is directly opposed to materialism." De Pressense puts, then, the atomic theory to the same searching inquiry, and concludes with a quotation from Lange's great work on materialism: "The

misunderstood or unintelligible remainder from our analysis is always the matter, however far we choose to carry it. . . . As we analyze the things step by step, the as yet unanalyzed remainder always remains as matter, the true representative of the thing." Truly these conclusions are somewhat disturbing to the apostles of this faith.

Mr. Balfour, in "The Foundations of Belief," perplexes the advocates of this ism yet more. "What is a material thing?" he asks. "Nothing could be plainer till you consider it. Nothing can be obscurer when you do. A 'thing' has qualities—hardness, weight, shape, and so forth. Is it merely the sum of these qualities, or is it something more? If it is merely the sum of its qualities, have these any independent existence? Nay, is such an independent existence even conceivable? If it is something more, what is the relation of the 'qualities' to the something more? Again, can we, on reflection, regard a thing as an isolated 'something,' an entity self-sufficient and potentially solitary? Or must we not rather regard it as being what it is in virtue of its relation to other 'somewhats,' which again are what they are in virtue of their relation to it and to each other? And if we take, as I think we must, the latter alternative, are we not driven by it into a profitless progression through parts which are unintelligible by them-

selves, but which yet obstinately refuse to coalesce into any fully intelligible whole?"

What, then, is this simple elementary "matter" by the recognition of whose all-supremacy we are promised relief from all mystery and intellectual unrest? It is, according to Le Gallienne, a something of whose essence scientists know nothing; it is, according to De Pressense, a something to be known only at second-hand, and it is being ever more and more idealized; it is, according to Mr. Balfour, a "somewhat," which has virtue only in relation to an infinite series of somewhats, refusing to "coalesce into any fully intelligible whole." A little diffidence, then, upon the part of its interpreters would be not unbecoming.

Humility, too, should be begotten by a history of failures, and this is the history of this betrumperedism.

To begin, the endeavor to identify mind and matter has absolutely failed. That there is a close and intimate relation between the two is admitted, but similarity is not identity. The relation of the mind and brain was poetically expressed by Plato long ago as that between the musician and the lyre, and the latest scientific thought says "amen" to this simile. The two are not one. Mind cannot be expressed in terms of matter. You cannot say of an idea that it is round or square. You cannot say of love that it is hard or soft. You cannot say

of joy that it is orange or red. You cannot say of hate that it weighs one pound or three. You cannot say of grief that it is circular or elliptical. In a word, not a single intellectual operation can be described in material terms.

Nor have any physiologists bridged the gulf between certain convolutions of the brain, certain cerebral phenomena, and an idea. How a mechanical movement, taking place in the nervous fibers or ganglion cells, can become an act of consciousness is absolutely incomprehensible. For this statement there is high authority. Says Mr. Tyn-dall, in "Fragments of Science": "The passage from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness is unthinkable. Granted that a definite thought or a definite molecular action in the brain occurs simultaneously, there is no process of reasoning by which we can pass from one to the other. They appear together, but we do not know why. Let the consciousness of love, for example, be associated with a right-handed spiral motion of the brain, and the consciousness of hate with a left-handed spiral motion. We should then know that when we love the motion is in one direction, and when we hate the motion is in the other; but the why would remain as unanswerable as before. The problem of the connection of body and soul is as insoluble in its modern form as it was in the pre-historic ages."

That the connection is close, even as between the rower and the boat, is not to be doubted, but it is not so intimate as was once supposed. A few years ago the phrenologists professed to discover an exact correspondence between the external conformation of the skull and the brain. The outside was supposed to represent the inside. But the religion of "bumps" seems to be altogether discarded. Then the materialist said that it all depended upon cranial capacity, but it was found that according to this standard Englishwomen were inferior intellectually to the negresses of Dahomey. When the proportion of brain to height and weight is considered, man is, according to this test, greatly inferior in brain power to the elephant, the monkey, or the canary. Obviously this would not do, so this ground was abandoned, and it was asserted that intellectuality is always indicated by the twists, convolutions, ridges, furrows of the brain. This hobby-horse was ridden recklessly until it was unfortunately discovered that in the matter of convolutions the sheep surpassed the dog, while of all animals, including man, the donkey carried the palm.

"Intelligence," says Bossuet, "cannot originate from an insensate thing." Commenting on this saying, Janet, in his monumental work on "Final Causes" (chapter on Mechanism and Finality), says: "The mechanical philosophy has never taken

account of this problem. . . . It is evident that for a brain to think it must be organized in the wisest manner, and that the more complicated this organization the more probable it is that the combinations of matter will be disorganized and consequently unfit for thought. Thought, in whatever manner explained, is an order, a system, a regular and harmonious combination; it is a system all the elements of which behoove to be coördinated in order to form a whole. . . . The question always is how blind matter, without plan and without end, can have so coördinated its diverse parts so as to form an organ so delicate that the least disorder suffices to interrupt its functions. If matter, submissive alone to physical laws, had formed the organ of thought, it seems that madness ought to have been the rule and reason the exception; for what a miracle it is that all these sentient and vibrating-cells of which the cerebral organ is said to be composed should so accord with each other and with the external world that the result of all these movements is a thought agreeing with itself and with the external world." Truly, a "miracle," and yet to escape miracles did this gospel set itself.

This identification of matter and mind also failed to account for the phenomenon of personality. "I am. I am I." By what right, if this doctrine be true? I am not I at all. I am, according to Mr. Spencer, "but a group of psychical states,

constituting an impulse." Why affirm personality of such an aggregation? "My name is legion," said the man in the gospels possessed with devils. And so may the materialists declare. In all strictness the materialist should discard the singular pronoun I, and being only a "group of psychical states" should say "we."

Mr. Tyndall discourses very eloquently on "The Scientific Uses of the Imagination," and we are led to suspect that at times these savants know something, too, of uses of the imagination not altogether scientific. Mr. Spencer says "my coat, my hat." But what a strange inconsistency for one particle of matter to rise up and say of another particle of matter "mine." A somewhat incongruous action, even for a dignified collection of "psychical states."

Materialism also utterly breaks down in its account of the origin of things. Our philosophers tell us, as they superciliously bow Jehovah out of His universe, that they now have no longer need of the hypothesis of God, that they have found the primal germ of all life, that in a nucleated vesicle we find the starting point of all vegetable and animal life. Granting the eternity of mere matter, we come at last to the introduction of life. Can we see the bridge over which the inorganic passes into the organic, the non-living into the living? Mr. Darwin pronounces it "absolutely inconceivable."

In his article on biology, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Mr. Huxley says: "The chasm between the not living and the living the present state of knowledge cannot bridge." But others, it has been stated, hold that in this "nucleated vesicle" they have the beginning. Then who endowed that particle with life? Let us have the words of Dr. Carpenter, one of the greatest authorities of our time. According to this materialistic belief he says: "There must have been a time when inorganic elements alone existed on the planet; let any assumption be made such as that the reeking atmosphere was charged with carbonic acid, compounds, phosphorus, etc. Now, is there a fact, or a shadow of a fact, supporting the belief that these elements, without the presence of any organic compounds, and acted on only by known forces, could produce a living creature? It is absolutely "inconceivable." So, then, no matter how far back the materialist may go in his endeavor to account for the world and life from the mechanical standpoint, he is brought at last to the gulf which separates between the non-living and the living, and this gulf, the masters tell us, cannot be bridged.

Life everywhere precedes organization, and not organization life. Granting with Mr. Tyndall that so fine a thing as love, as will, was "once latent in a fiery cloud," the question is asked how did it

come there with its wondrous endowment? And how comes it that the stream has risen higher than its source? How comes it that from inert, senseless matter you have, through some mad gyration of atoms, at the end a Shakespeare, a Plato, a Paul? How comes it that this thing, without eyes, can paint so well, without a voice can sing a seraph's song? Says Carlyle of Frederick the Great: "Atheism truly, he never could abide; to him, as to all of us, it was flatly inconceivable that intellect, moral emotion, could have been put into him by an entity that had none of its own." Inconceivable, indeed. Mr. Tyndall, in a fascinating reverie, entitled "Musings on the Matterhorn," speaking of how the Matterhorn's future decay and death saddened him, says that his thought wandered through molten worlds to that nebulous haze which philosophers have regarded as the source of all material things. And he asks himself, "Did that formless fog contain potentially the sadness with which I regarded the Matterhorn?" And again we say, with Frederick and Carlyle, "It is absolutely inconceivable."

Materialism stultifies itself intellectually. For this statement there is high authority. In "The Foundations of Belief" Mr. Balfour says: "It is absolutely ruinous to knowledge. It requires us to accept a system as rational one of whose doctrines is, that the system itself is the product of causes

which have no tendency to truth rather than falsehood, or falsehood rather than truth. . . . Consider the following propositions, selected from the naturalistic creed or deduced from it:

"1. My beliefs, so far as they are the results of reasoning at all, are founded on premises produced in the last resort by a collision of atoms.

"2. Atoms having no prejudice in favor of truth are as likely to turn out wrong premises as right ones; nay, more likely, inasmuch as truth is single and error manifold.

"3. My premises, therefore, in the first place, and my conclusions in the second place, are certainly untrustworthy, and probably false. Their falsity, moreover, is of a kind which cannot be remedied, since any attempt to correct it must start from premises not suffering under the same defect; but no such premises exist.

Therefore, again, my opinion about the original causes which produced my premises, as it is an inference from them, partakes of their weakness; so that I cannot either securely doubt my own certainties or be certain about my own doubts." There cannot probably be found in all dialectics a more conclusive condemnation of a system through a statement of its doctrines than is before us in this summing up of Mr. Balfour. No argument, further, is needed after such luminous phrasing.

Again, materialism stultifies itself morally. If

thought is, as the materialist affirms, but a molecular motion, why is one thought said to be good, another bad, one wise, another foolish? Is one molecular motion better than another? Why the sentiment of approbation or disapproval? If a man speaks truth only because of a certain movement of the brain particles, and falsehood because of another movement, why praise him for the one or condemn him for the other? Why, if mechanism or fate or chance rules all, should there be any difference in the quality of actions? The saint on his knees and the murderer at the throat of his victim are alike but figures on the board moved by the player, Necessity.

Well does Mr. Balfour say: "Morality and reason are august names which give an air of respectability to certain actions and certain arguments; but it is quite obvious, on examination, that if the naturalistic hypothesis be correct, they are but unconscious tools in the hands of their immoral and non-rational antecedents, and that the real responsibility for all they do lies in the distribution of matter and energy which happened to prevail far back in the incalculable past."

Into such a Serbonian bog this gospel would lead us. Shall we follow?

Not so have the real thinkers of all the ages. This system has never commended itself to the world's greatest minds. Socrates was no materi-

alist. In Plato's Phædon he is made to say: "You may bury me if you can catch me. Do not call this poor body Socrates. When I have drunk the poison, I shall leave you and go to the joys of the blessed. I would not have you say at my interment, 'Thus we follow him to the grave and bury him.' Be of good cheer; say that you are burying my body only."

Goethe was no materialist. In conversation with his friend Eckerman, on the immortality of the soul, Goethe, gazing upon the setting sun, declared: "Setting, nevertheless the sun is always the same sun. I am fully convinced that our spirit is a being of a nature quite indestructible, and that its activity continues from eternity to eternity."

Lowell was not a materialist:

"God of our fathers, thou who wast,
 Art, and shall be, when the eye-wise who flout
 Thy secret presence shall be lost
 In the great light that dazzles them to doubt;
 We who believe life's bases rest
 Beyond the probe of chemic test,
 Still like our fathers feel thee near."

Tennyson was no materialist:

"If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,
 I heard a voice, 'Believe no more,'
 And heard an ever-breaking shore,
 That tumbled in the Godless deep;
 "A warmth within the breast would melt
 The freezing reason's colder part,
 And like a man in wrath the heart
 Stood up and answered, "*I have felt.*"

Wordsworth worshiped not at this drear altar:

"And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts, a sense sublime,
Of something far more deeply interfused;
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky and in the mind of man
A motion *and a spirit* that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things."

Edward Saltus, in his book on "The Anatomy of Negation," has a chapter entitled "The Dissent of the Seers," but it is noticeable that not one of his "seers," not one of his preachers of materialism, is in the very front rank of thinkers. The regal minds in the world of philosophy have never turned to the gospel of materialism, but have ever said with Bacon, "I had rather believe all the fables in the legend and the Talmud and the Alcoran than that this universal frame is without a mind. . . . It is true that a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but depths in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion."

If materialism be true, then immortality is a dream, and over all fair worlds at last will reign the desolation of death. For if man be wholly material, then he must wholly die; then all yearnings after a life beyond are to be forever unmet; then all hopes of reunion with our dear lost ones are but illusions; then all visions of earth's

164 Some Latter-Day Religions

seers are idle, and all earth's tragic generations but pressing their way to the tomb that opens not. The Chinese sage puts it mercilessly: "All are born and all die; the intelligent and the stupid, the honorable and the mean. At ten years old some die; at one hundred years old some die. The virtuous and the sage die; the ruffian and the fool also die. Alive they were Yaou and Shun, the most virtuous of men; dead they are so much rotten bone. Alive they were Klee and Chow, the most wicked of men; dead they are so much rotten bone. While alive, therefore, let us hasten to make the best of life; when about to die let us treat the thing with indifference, and seeking to accomplish our departure so abandon ourselves to annihilation."

Death to the child in its mother's arms; death to the maiden in her virginal tenderness; death to the strong man in the passion of his work; death to the old in their unblest years; to high and low, to rich and poor, to saint and sinner—death, death, only death, the carnival of worms and foul decay! Death not only to the individual, but to all. This planet will die, these wise men say, and if man is altogether material, then he, too, will be coffined with the dead world, and in cycles yet to come all living things will have passed away, and the dreary hours will look out upon the monstrous spectacle of a universe of death! And

this, too, is given not as a maniac's dream, but as the sober voice of science.

No stronger presentation of the cause of belief in its opposition to this insainty of destruction has been made than in "The Creed of Science," quoted by Dr. Newton. After a consideration of the difficulties in the way of faith, the author turns upon these objections: "According to your argument, all thought is bound up with the bodily machine or organism, and disappears with it, and if all organisms disappear, as science teaches they will, then all mind would also vanish from the universe. Either this must be, or mind can exist without the bodily machinery, which scientific materialism does not grant. Is this conclusion credible? Is it possible that mind—the thing so splendid in its higher manifestations, with its vision of beauty, its depth of tender affection, its Godlike apprehension of truth, its divine enthusiasm for right—this subtle and wonderful essence so slowly gathered and distilled through countless ages, as evolution teaches, should be thus recklessly spilled and lost again out of the universe? . . . Is nature so blind and stupid, as well as so foolishly wasteful of her gathered grains, as to throw away the grandest thing—the only really great thing—she had reached, and to throw it away just when she had perfected it? Is it thinkable that all consciousness should perish, and that eternal night and nothing-

ness should set in? That the universe should return once again to the cosmic vapor and the eternal silence from which it came, from which it first proceeded? We might become reconciled to the belief, however insufficient the evidence for it appears to be, that the earth, the sun, nay, all the spheres of space, should die; we might even have accepted the extinction of our hopes of personal immortality; but when we find that the same argument which destroys all these and ourselves brings us in the end to a universe of death, we must conclude that there is a vice in the reasoning which leads to a conclusion so desperate and absurd."

O purblind science! To all its croaking voices the soul replies: "I have felt," and cherishes precious dreams. Death is not creation's crown, but life. The universe finds its best expression, not in terms of matter, but of spirit. The soul is not to be robbed of its birthright, nor drowned in the seas of nothingness.

"The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years:
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds."

"There has been a terrible emigration from Crete to the spirit-land. Those are terrible liars over there as well as here. You call for Plato and up steps Tim Finnegan and says, 'Yis sor, that's me intoirely.'"

Toast for Jubilee of Spiritism.

"Fifty years of Spiritism:

Contribution to knowledge—nothing.

Contribution to morals—nothing.

Chief Characteristics:

Intellectual feebleness and confusions.

Moral tendency to tolerate everything questionable."

"Chalk Lines Over Morals," Caverno, p. 218.

"Perhaps it is not meant that we should know much about it (the other world) while immersed in the pursuits and duties of the present life. It might take our minds too far away from what we ought to be doing now. It seems evident from man's experience that he was made to believe in the future life, but was not made to know much about it. Enough to know that it is just as great a blessing to die as to live, perhaps greater. . . . We shall never go away from His presence or His care."

"Ten Great Religions," James Freeman Clarke, p. 344.

IX

SPIRITUALISM

"I shut myself up to begin the building of the bridge between this world and the world of spirits; when I have bridged this abyss, I will emerge from my retirement, and those who are qualified to receive enlightenment shall know the result." This is the latest deliverance of Mr. W. T. Stead, journalist, author, reformer. His sincerity commands respect, his aim is high. We note his withdrawal from the world with sadness, and mournfully pronounce the "vale," feeling that our bridge-builder will never emerge from the shadows into which he plunges. We do not follow Mr. Stead's lead in many of his romancings, and we stoutly contend that the abyss that haunts him has been bridged already; yet we can but respect his brave endeavors.

And who but has wished, when faith was weak, that some tangible, palpable proof of the reality of the spirit world might be given, and that faith should pass into seeing? Here, in the soul that cries, "I believe, help thou my unbelief," spiritism finds an ally. Human sorrow, too, locks hands

with a faltering faith. Resolve this mystery, moans the hurt soul. O thou spirit world, make clear the meaning of my chastisement, help me in my unspeakable grief. The lone hour comes when

"We long for the touch of a vanished hand
And the sound of a voice that is still,"

and with it almost uncontrollable longing, through any sort of mediumship, to have glimpse and hearing once again of our beloved.

Thus, in the human soul, in the trembling of faith, and in grief's divine despair, spiritism finds helpers, the open door, the too willing belief.

And there have not been found wanting men, sober and thoughtful, who have affirmed that in these crucial days, when the tide of materialism threatens to engulf the world, through spiritistic revelations its onward march would be stayed. John Wesley lent a willing ear to the advocates of spiritualism. He held that if true, it is a powerful prop of faith. "If but one account of the intercourse of men with superior spirits be admitted, their whole castle in the air" [deism, atheism, materialism] "falls to the ground." James Freeman Clarke, leader of present-day Unitarians, in his "Ten Great Religions," declares: "I should be glad to believe in it" [spiritualism], "especially for the benefit of those who are deficient in the instinct of immortality, or who have

not much faith in the divine presence and love." "But," he adds, "I confess that what I have seen in this movement is not very edifying." That Corypheus of orthodoxy, Joseph Cook, has also written in a similar strain.

It is to be regretted that there is nothing in the later developments of this ism that affords any foundation for a rational belief in its ultimate helpfulness. Whatever Christian thinkers may at times have hoped from this source, it is no longer to be questioned that spiritualism is declining, and that all promise of its helpfulness has been blasted.

But long enough have we stood at the threshold of this study; let us enter. Yet a word as to the spirit of the inquiry: let it not be that of the dogmatist. Phenomena simply because they are occult are not to be discredited. About not only physical, but psychical matters as well, Descartes's contention holds true, that what we know is as nothing in comparison with what remains to be known:

However abrupt, after the above catholic deliverance, the following propositions are now laid down:

First, that the revelations of spiritualism are worthless; second, that these revelations are in the main fraudulent; third, that the revelations that are genuine are susceptible of explanation on naturalistic grounds; fourth, that it is hurtful to both

body and mind; fifth, that its tendency is immoral.

To the first proposition: The revelations of spiritualism are worthless. It is now half a century since modern spiritualism began its career. In this time thousands and thousands of messages have been professedly received from the spirit world. Across the chasm which Mr. Stead is still trying to bridge spirits have come from other worlds to reveal their secrets. In trance and vision the spirits of mediums have made daring excursions into far-off and to us unknown worlds. And what is the result of it all—dreams of mediums, revelations of apostles, ghost visitants from the land of shades? What have they brought us? What new truth is ours? What know we more of the life beyond, the home of souls, now than before? What new light has been flashed upon the conduct of life? Let spiritualists answer. In this half century, in which it is claimed spiritualism has passed from the experimental to the scientific stage, the spirits of the good and the great who have once lived upon the earth have, in darkened room, at word of medium, come back to hold converse with mortals, but not only had they no new light to offer, but even seemed to have lost what intelligence was theirs upon the earth. Heaven seems to marvelously encourage degeneracy. Says Madame Blavatsky: "During the past twenty years we have received through various mediums messages

purporting to come from Shakespeare, Byron, Napoleon and Josephine, and even from Voltaire. The general impression made upon us was that the French Emperor and his consort seemed to have forgotten how to spell correctly; Shakespeare and Byron had become chronic inebriates, and Voltaire had turned an imbecile." Of a similar nature is the statement of Dr. Felton, once president of Harvard, quoted by Dr. Lorimer. Dr. Felton was a classicist, and had written learnedly about Pericles. One time in a Boston circle he invoked the ghost of the statesman, and the Greek took possession of the medium. "I put to him a series of questions about Athens in his time, but he had not only lost all knowledge of all that he ever done during the forty years of his administration, but he had even forgotten his mother tongue. I could only exclaim with Hamlet: 'Alas, poor ghost,' and turn again to my books." Thus ever. Now, one may be over-nice about it, but it is a little disturbing the kind of company spirits seem to prefer: a little disquieting to think that our loved ones, deaf to our cries in the sanctities of our own homes, will yet reveal themselves in the little back parlor of the medium when the lights are turned low. Even this, however, could be forgiven had they aught to say when they came. But they are not only of questionable taste, but alas! stupid. Their revelations are vapid. That most modern, and on the whole,

most accomplished spook we know, "Julia," forms no exception to this general rule. "Julia" has told Mr. Stead no more than he knew before, and if in his bridge-building she is to be of no more service in the future than she has been thus far, our journalist will be long in his undertaking.

Whatever of successes spiritism may have attained in other fields, here it is a hopeless failure. Andrew Jackson Davis interviews Kant, but the great German is as wandering and incoherent as Davis. The Kidder book, professing to be the deliverances of Shakespeare and other worthies is but drivel. We would hear again these immortal singers; we would sit at the feet of the great Plato, with academicians of old; but alas and alas! when the singers are worse than tuneless, and wisdom of the philosopher is but the senility of idiocy!

The second proposition is that the revelations of spiritualism are mostly fraudulent. It is not affirmed that the thousands who have been duped by these pretended revelations have connived at fraud, nor that every apostle of this ism has been an imposter, but it is affirmed that its revelations are bogus and that its high priests have been as arrant humbugs as ever walked the earth. It began in fraud. Andrew Jackson Davis, an educated man, was mesmerized by Dr. Lyon, and while in this mesmeric state dictated a book entitled "The

Principles of Nature, Her Divine Revelations and a Voice to Mankind." Of this book the aforementioned Lyon said: "I will make him (Davis) write a book which will take the place of the Bible and which will bring in fifty thousand dollars." The book did not quite displace the Bible, but it did bring in some money, and proved to be the opening scene in this fakir-drama of modern spiritualism. Among those prominent in those early days were the Fox sisters, who prevailed upon the spirits to "rap," thus indicating their presence. A wonder was in the air. Without physical means the rap, rap, rap was distinctly produced. The "sisters'" fame was blown far and wide, and they began to appear in the larger cities of the Atlantic coast. But this large and consequential bubble was soon to be mercilessly pricked. A sister-in-law, Mrs. Culver, was let into the secret, and rather unhandsomely divulged it. "Those mysterious raps," she solemnly declared before witnesses, "were not produced by spirits at all, but by the toes of the Fox sisters." By a little practice they had come to be able to make a certain cracking sound with the joints of their toes, and thus in very unpoetical, unæsthetic way did they usher in the reign of spooks. To explain all the phenomena of spiritualism or to detail the exposures of this ism would require volumes. Let but this be said, that many of its puzzling phenomena are to be explained in the light of magnetism,

mesmerism, and kindred occult phenomena; many are due solely to the juggler's art.

All of the stock tricks have been laid bare. Slate-writing has been exposed again and again, and one of the most adept slate-writing mediums, Dr. Slade, was detected in his imposture, and fined. Cabinet tricks, the materialization of spirits, etc., have been exposed. The Katie King tests, which Robert Dale Owen declared were the most wonderful he had ever seen, were discovered to be fraudulent, and the disappointment, it is said, well nigh drove Mr. Owen insane. Eva Fay, Holmes, the Davenport mediums, have all met the same fate. Charles B. Cutler, an ex-spiritualist, after his renunciation of spiritualism, went up and down the country with the following challenge: "I will remove handcuffs, materialize hands and faces, have a form walk out of the cabinet while I am supposed to be securely bound in my chair; I will allow myself to be ironed to the floor of my cabinet, and will free myself without breaking a chain; I will expose materialization, also slate-writing; I guarantee to duplicate any trick any medium can do after witnessing it twice." Thus are the mighty fallen!

Dr. Carpenter recounts the following: During the meeting of the British Association at Belfast in 1874 a medium was holding spiritualistic seances, at which she distributed flowers, affirming

that they were brought to her then and there by the spirits, fresh from the garden. Many converts were made. One skeptical young gentleman, however, who was staying at the same house, and did not share this confidence, found a basin full of these flowers (hollyhocks) in a garret, with a decanter of water beside it, and strongly suspecting that they were stored there with a view to distribution at the seance, and that the dew would be supplied when wanted from the decanter, he conveyed into the water a chemical substance (ferro-cyanide of potassium) in quantity so small as not to tinge it, and yet to be distinctly recognized by the proper tests. The seance was held, the flowers were distributed, and when test was made they were found to give *Prussian blue*!

It is sad work, this conning the pages of cheap wizardry; a sad revelation, these dreary disclosures of spiritualistic frauds. But is it all fraudulent? No, hardly all.

This brings us to the third proposition, that the revelations not fraudulent are susceptible of an explanation on purely natural grounds. Perhaps a satisfactory explanation cannot be given of all spiritistic phenomena, but certainly enough of light is thrown on them to enable us to know from what world they come. Here are the clues—telepathy, hypnotism, subjective vision, mental expectancy. In this borderland of the occult, in a light

as yet only dim, is the explanation of spiritistic phenomena to be had. Only barest hints are possible here. Let Caverno, Carpenter, and Hudson state the case. Take the visualization of spirits. All spiritualists claim that the spirits of the dead, at the bidding of the medium, come to converse with their friends on earth. Not only is the claim made, but substantiated in all good faith by the testimony of converts to this creed. What explanation is there of this phenomenon? Have these who testify *seen* their dead loved ones and had converse with them? Yes, subjectively. The images of the dead were not stamped upon the retina of the eye, but of the soul. Physiological psychologists have proved to us beyond question that subjective vision is real. In dreams we see, but it is the subjective vision; the drunkard in delirium tremens sees horrible crawling things upon floor and wall, but it is subjective vision; reverie is subjective seeing.

In the darkened rooms of the medium we see our dead, but they are the "outward projections" of the subjective vision, and not the "inward projections" of the objective vision. The dead are in our minds, not in the room.

There is much, as Dr. Carpenter reminds us, in mental prepossessions. They produce sensations having no objective reality. Expect to see a thing, and it is seen. He refers to persons who have waking dreams, which they can induce by placing

themselves in a condition favorable to reverie, and the course of these dreams is essentially determined by the individual's prepossessions, brought into play by suggestions conveyed from without.

To this category spiritualistic performances are referred. "I have strong reason to believe, from my conviction of the honesty of the individuals who have themselves narrated to me their experiences, that they have really seen and felt and heard what they describe; that is, that they had the same distinct consciousness, in states of expectant reverie, of seeing, touching, and conversing with the spirits of departed friends that most of us occasionally have in our dreams. And the difference consists in this: that whilst one, in the exercise of his common sense, dismisses these experiences as the creations of his own brain, having no objective reality, the other, under the influence of his prepossessions, accepts them as the results of impressions *ab extra*, made upon him by 'spiritual agencies.' "

Is not mesmerism in itself sufficient to account for these phenomena? All have seen subjects in the mesmeric state respond to the suggestions of the operator, seeing what he wished, hearing what he desired. Is not the explanation of these revelations to be looked for upon these confessedly adequate grounds rather than through the agency of spirits?

Thomas Jay Hudson, in "The Law of Psychic Phenomena," finds the explanation in the telepathic communication of the medium with the "subjective mind" of the auditor. The medium becomes *en rapport* with the audience, enters into sympathetic understanding of their subjective minds, and upon the deep-buried pages of these subjective minds finds in letters writ large the story that is ascribed to supernatural agencies. That this is the true explanation, he holds, is shown by the helplessness of mediums in the presence of skeptical investigators. "I undertake to say that no medium ever was or ever can be powerful enough to produce his phenomena under test conditions in presence of a hostile and aggressively skeptical committee." Mr. Hudson sums up his discussion thus: "I repeat it, the percipient sees the image of that which is in the mind of the agent, and he never sees more than that. . . . No medium has ever yet been able to impart any information that is not known either to the medium or to some living person with whom he is *en rapport*."

And, finally, granting for argument's sake that there are yet inexplicable spiritistic phenomena, is it the part of wisdom to gulp down, against all probabilities, the spiritistic explanations of those phenomena? Will you cry "ghost" simply because you come to the dark?

The fourth proposition is that spiritualism is hurtful to both body and mind.

It is an enemy of health. The production of spiritistic phenomena, however explained, racks the body. As a rule, mediums are naturally of nervous temperament. Their work renders them more and more nervous, more and more excitable, and its only logical sequence is insanity. First and last, the system is an experiment with raw nerve. You can get remarkable phenomena at the end of nervous possibilities. But you can have health only when you keep nerve down to sober companionship with staid muscle. Those who attend seances with any degree of frequency pay for their attendance with shattered nerves. And the end of the road, as has been stated, is insanity. Says Hudson: "It is undeniable that the tendency of mediumship is to unhinge the mind, to destroy the mental balance, and often to produce the worst form of insanity. The more thoroughly sincere the medium is in his belief in the genuineness of his power to evoke the spirits of the dead, the greater is the tendency to insanity. If he sincerely believes himself to be under the control of a superior power, he yields implicit obedience to it. He is ignorant of the fact that the force resides within himself, and thinks it commissioned from above. Instead of controlling it, he is controlled by it. His reason abdicates its throne and aban-

dons its functions, and he is at the mercy of his subjective mind, which is controlled by the false suggestions of his own disorganized and subjugated objective intelligence. His physical degeneracy keeps pace with his mental decline; his whole nervous system is prostrated by excessive exercise of subjective power, and too frequently the end is acute mania or driveling imbecility."

The fifth proposition is: the tendency of spiritualism is immoral.

That it is anti-Christian we presume none will deny. In an up-to-date spiritualistic organ, among other choice bits, are these: "Is it possible to devise a religious faith which will encourage crime equal to Christianity?" If anything can be worse than the grammar of this extract it is its spirit. Again: "They" [the preachers] "want the young to listen to their imbecile harangues about degraded man, a wrathful God, his virgin-born Son, and all to oblige a dotard priesthood and their willing tools." These savory morsels are quite enough for a full meal. Certainly the grammar of this sheet is quite as good as its morals. And this is a representative organ. Modern spiritualism is bitterly hostile to the Christian faith. But it is more than anti-Christian—it is immoral. Let us make short work of this disagreeable task. The writer has in his possession a series of letters written years ago by Moses Hull, one of the apostles of spiritualism, to

a Kentucky preacher, in which the hope is expressed that this minister may soon leave the church, and with Hull and other saints breathe "the purer air of spiritualism." What has this Hull become through breathing this "purer air"? An advocate of free-love, who hesitates not to practice what he preaches.

On the whole subject of the morals of this cult, let its doctrines be given without comment. Andrew Jackson Davis says that "Sin in the common acceptance of the term does not exist." Dr. A. B. Childs, in his book, "Whatever Is, Is Right," which is enthusiastically indorsed by spiritualists everywhere, affirms that "Every desire is religion to the soul that produces that desire." "Vice is sandpaper to the soul." "Vice and virtue both are right and in place." "The degradation of prostitution is a phantom of materialism that belongs to self-righteousness." "There has been no deed in the catalogue of crime that has not been a valuable experience to the inner being of the man who committed it." These citations are given by the Rev. Mr. Craft. At the Rhode Island spiritualist convention Mr. Wheeler states: "As spiritualists we have not acknowledged that there is such a thing as moral obligation." "Drunkenness is just as good as soberness." Six spiritualist editors are free-lovers! Davis ruined a family to secure his "affinity," Moses Hull, himself a spiritualist, says

in his paper: "We have damning facts against nearly all spiritualist editors," and contends that the office of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, a rival organ, is "headquarters for thieves and libertines."

The Michigan spiritualists, in convention, resolve "that the only open door out of our difficulties is the entire abrogation of marriage laws, leaving the sexes free to seek harmonious associations under the laws of nature." The spiritualists of Massachusetts declare in convention: "All sin is a necessity." "There are greater uses in sin than in holiness." In an editorial in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* we read: "In licentiousness we find the outcropping of the God-element in man." And finally in the *Banner of Light*, "We thank Thee for all conditions of men, for the drunkard, for the prostitute." These quotations are all verifiable. What an unhallowed chorus of lust! No severer indictment of this ism could be conceived than these citations.

It is not held that all who hold to this ism are immoral—far from it; but the contention is that its tendency is toward immorality, and that its literature is of poison. Hudson, who is careful to say that many spiritualists disclaim such teachings as the above, adds: "Nevertheless, the moral virus took effect here and there all over the country, and it is doing its deadly work in secret and in many an

otherwise happy home. And I charge a large and growing class of professional mediums with being the leading propagandists of the doctrine of free-love. They infest every community in the land, and it is well known to all men and women who are dissatisfied and unhappy in their marriage relations that they can always find sympathy by consulting the average medium, and can, moreover, find justification for illicit love by invoking the spirits dead through such mediums." No wonder that in the light of such revelations one of the keenest critics of this gospel should have said: "If it has opened the heavens, something heavenly ought to have descended upon it, whereas it has scarcely kept up to the level of the earth. Given a God, and I do not believe He would *let* communication between worlds take place by so unhealthy a process as mediumship. Given a God, and I do not believe He would unlock the secret of eternity to so characterless a movement as spiritism."

"Wherefore fools (with M. Comte) conceive there is no living God because they cannot condense His formulas into their small smelling bottles."

"Letters and Memories," Chas. Kingsley, p. 299.

"The road from London to Edinburgh may be improved ; horses may become swifter, carriages lighter ; but Edinburgh seems likely to stay pretty nearly in the same spot where it is now."

"Guesses at Truth," Hare, p. 162.

"The reaction against theology seems about to have lost its force. We have begun to see that our new conditions require not the abolition of theology, but its reconstruction. . . . Criticism may assail the historical facts of revelation ; rationalism may urge objections to its doctrines ; the surf on our coast of Maine might as easily overthrow the granite cliffs against which it breaks as criticism and rationalism distrust the Christian realities which stand firm in the experience of the individual believer."

"Present Day Theology," Stearns, p. 537.

"Faith is the son's receptivity ; it is that temper of trust which makes the entry of succors possible ; it is the medium of response ; it is the attitude of adherence to the father by virtue of which communications can pass. If faith goes, all further action of God upon the soul, all fresh arrival of power, is made impossible. The channel of intercourse is blocked."

"Lux Mundi," p. 17.

X

LIBERALISM

Liberalism is fortunate in its name, a name with all soft beguilements and seductive invitations. The color of the sun is in it, blinding all. For who would be the supposed antithesis of all this—narrow, blind, a bigot? Liberalism by its very name suggests catholicity, wide vision, world spaces, the sweep of planets, and we are glad even by the trick of a word to be elevated into an imagined greatness. A little man calls himself a liberalist, and by the very magic of the name swells up into a Brobdignag. A spectacular success is this ism, yet before the altar of liberalism we burn no incense; for this altar stands not for the true, the beautiful, the good. The liberalists are the comprachicos of the present century. And who were the comprachicos? Let Hugo tell us. They were a hideous association of wanderers who traded in children. First they kidnaped them, then they made monsters out of them. To please the morbid fancy of kings who sought for the fantastic and the horrible, they would make of man an abortion. They took a face and made a muz-

zle; they stunted growth; they kneaded the features; where God had put a look they put a squint; where God had made harmony they established discord; they converted, in a word, a beautiful child into a hideous monster. This is, in briefest sketch, the character of liberalism. It has taken the fair child of truth, disfigured it, and converted it into a monster. And yet before this abortion we are commanded to bow down.

Note first the spirit of this ism. To begin, it is the spirit of egotism. Liberalists assure us that they represent the learning and the culture of the age. The conservatives, the orthodox, are hopelessly narrow, unlearned, raw. Charles Dudley Warner, in one of his works, tells us that it takes several hundred years to make a gentleman, to make a man so cultured that he is ignorant of his culture; to whom culture is nature, is life, is part of himself. If Mr. Warner be correct, these gentlemen, whose cheeks are quite puffed out through the exertion of their own trumpetings, are several degrees removed from the ideal. Perhaps, though, it is easier to become a theologian than a gentleman. O for the grace of modesty! The rest of the world may be very ignorant, to be sure, but certes, it is not pretty in the liberalist to bawl it from the housetops.

Liberalism is irreverent. "Gentlemen will take their hats off," reads the board. In some places,

at some times, yes. But liberalism never does. It never uncovers itself. During the Revolutionary War King George's soldiers stabled their horses in Boston churches and cracked scurrilous jests in temples dedicated to the worship of God. We stand aghast, and yet here in these latter days a grosser profanation goes unrebuked. To convert a church into a stable is bad. To convert a church into a players' stage, where little men with cap and bells amuse the populace, is infinitely worse.

And liberalism is, of all things, most illiberal. It boasts of its catholicity, and is pitifully provincial. It has its shibboleths, and woe to him who does not pronounce them. Agree with the liberal, and you are progressive, enlightened, a blending of sweetness and light. Disagree with him, and you are an ignoramus and a boor. Denouncing sectarianism, it is sectarian to the core; inveighing against bigotry, it sows a crop of bigots.

So much as to its spirit. Consider its methods. These, too, are not lovely. For what are its methods, its ways of working? The way of misrepresentation. Nothing is more easily proved than this proposition. Liberalism never represents correctly the doctrines it would overturn. Its representations are only caricatures. It is passing strange, but true, that even liberalists, who were at one time ministers in orthodox churches, seem utterly unable to state with even tolerable accuracy the

doctrines they once embraced. Here there is either a lamentable intellectual decline or a pitiable moral confusion. If orthodoxy is a devil, will not these gentlemen at least give him his traditional dues? Why insist on representing present-day Christians in the light of seventeenth-century theology? This is not the Christianity of the to-day; these are not the doctrines held to-day; these are not the heart beliefs of to-day; and any man who cares more for truth than victory ought to know it. Yet the sober fact remains that all the attacks made upon the church by these advanced philosophers are made upon the church of a century dark and dead. Let us have no more of this, no more of banditti work, stiletto thrustings in the back, but a fight in the open.

But our indignation over the spirit of liberalism, its egotism, its irreverence, its illiberalism, its falsities, is softened by the thought of its present low estate. For liberalism has fallen. Ichabod is written over all its vast pretentiousness. Born fifty years ago and more, the child of New England mysticism, Brook farm dreamings, Emersonian transcendentalisms, it sprang to a commanding preëminence. With the prestige of culture, of social position, of novelty, it entered the lists with confidence, and from silver trumpets blew loud and challenging defiance. A day has passed, a short day, and yet this beplumed knight has wasted away

to a spectral figure, but little left save his trumpet. With the trumpet our spectral friend still bravely battles. Yet 'tis a melancholy sight—a ghost blowing his horn! And the forces against which liberalism set itself are stronger than before. Orthodoxy, though we have been treated to its funeral sermon for several decades, is still alive. Evangelical religion has not been driven from the earth. Every day a simple, trusting Christianity wins new battles; its armies have encircled the world; its territory is enlarged. But liberalism is wasting away. This is no figment of the imagination, but the voice of the census. It is not even holding its own, and forever will Amiel's words hold good, "He who does not advance falls back." Liberalism is falling back. Its churches are being deserted. Boston is denying her own. Harvard is proving ungrateful. A hated conservatism is triumphant. The coffin is being made ready; the horses are being hitched to the hearse. There is little left save the last journey and the "dust to dust."

Such a story should make us pause. Involuntarily as we see this plunging forward to a speedy death, we seek for the underlying causes of the catastrophe. Why this failure? For one thing this: Liberalism substituted æsthetics for dynamics. Evangelical Christianity said you are justified by faith; liberalism said you are justified by taste. In

its almost insane hatred of Puritanism and its gloomy theology, liberalism came near forgetting that awful vision of beauty, the beauty of righteousness that had dawned upon the Puritan soul. Here was the primal blunder, the turning away in thought and speech from the beauty of righteousness to the adoration of beauty in literature and art in earth and sky. This was perhaps unconsciously done, all unwitting this fatal mistake, but the consequences were none the less real and tragical. Liberalism has failed to develop the heroic. *Æsthetics* always fail to develop the heroic. Your hero, your man of God, your soldier who goes forth to battle, must not be fed on sweetmeats. Iron thews do not come to him who in lotus land listens to purling of waters and songs of birds. Men need power as well as sweet reasonableness and light. But our wide-visioned brethren have not so learned. They make very unexceptionable music in my lady's boudoir, but they blow no bugle blasts. Liberalism charms, but does not inspire. It lulls to slumber, but leads no crusades. Its ministers, once proudly including an Emerson and a Channing, are but little more than parlor entertainers. The high and holy claims of the church have made way for the exactions of a club. Not power, but *æsthetics* do you find.

The world is turning away from such an ism. Men and women sorely tempted and tried feel the

need not of eau de cologne, but of the water of life; not of theological confections, but of that bread of which if a man eats he shall never hunger any more. A baffled, disappointed, despairing humanity finds satisfaction not in a club, but in a church builded on the rock, against which billows break in vain.

Liberalism has committed suicide through its trickery. It has striven to make capital out of assumed discoveries. Its apostles read of persecution in the name of Christianity, and forthwith announce that Christianity has been stained by the spirit of the persecutor. Indeed! And has not this been known all these years? By what right is this assumed to be a piece of news? "The church has often arrayed itself against science." Grammercy for thy intelligence. This, too, is a well-known story. "Theological dogmas have oft-times been monstrous." Really, the assumption that this is new is quite amusing. It is as if one coming into your house and finding a daily of 1899 should declare to you that through his scholarly research valuable truth had been brought to life. It is as if a passenger on a Cunarder should, on landing in New York, declare that he has discovered a new world, and forthwith write a book about it. Yet this revamping of all that has ever marred the creed and the life of the church is going on in the name of advanced thought, and

sermons bristle with these trite references. There is hardly a week but some genius discovers that the history of Christianity has been disfigured by fanaticisms, bigotries, persecutions, and with all the zeal of a discoverer he rushes into print with his antiquated news.

Liberalism obtains goods under false pretenses. It wears a mask; it has an alias. Liberalism is dishonest. It is either dishonest or ignorant. If ignorant, the density of such ignorance is appalling. Liberalism masquerades as Christian, would have itself enrolled among Christian forces, enjoys the prestige and influence that are the possessions of all Christian bodies, and yet it puzzles one to make out how in any sense it is Christian. It accepts none of the great doctrines common to Christians. The Bible is placed alongside the sacred books of India and Homeric songs; the doctrine of a personal immortality is not stoutly held; the doctrine of punishment in another world is made the subject of gross caricature; the Man of Galilee speaks with no authoritative voice, is no high Son of God, but simply one among the many of the world's teachers. Pray how can any ism with such sweeping denials lay claim to the title Christian?

Tricked out in a motley costume, one piece loaned by Confucius, another by Spiritualism, another by Christian science, another by Buddhism, why should this nondescript masquerade as

Christian? Without mincing words, it is downright infidelity, and ought to be content to be so dubbed. It is Voltairism doing business under a new name; "it is simply our modern atheism trying to hide its own nakedness for the benefit of the more prudish part of the public in the cast-off grave clothes of a Christ, who, whether He be vision or no, is certainly not here." Well, but, we hear, haven't men a right to freedom of thought and speech? Certainly. Can't a man deny Christianity in toto? Certainly, but he cannot so do and for considerations of policy continue to pose as a liberal Christian, and yet be honest.

When Byron wails his infidelity in awful "Dream," when Shelley shrieks out his atheistic creed, we can respect them, while we pity them. They sail under their true colors. But when a sect which is ever dramatically apotheosizing truth, sends its little gayly-ribboned bark out on the great wide sea, flying false colors, the world revolts from the deception. Let liberalism frankly own its poverty, its spiritual barrenness, its downright disbeliefs, taking its place with secular unchristian forces, and be weighed in the world's scales for what it is. Let the mask come off. Let not the high names of church, pulpit, preacher, service be prostituted in such ignoble way. Liberalism may have a club, an entertainer, an entertainment, but it can have no church, priest, worship.

196 Some Latter-Day Religions

But it does not dare to disclose its real self. Its ugliness would frighten, hence it is concealed. If a man were to say, "I am an atheist; I do not believe in your church, your Christ, your Bible, your God; I believe in nothing save my senses, and am not sure that I can trust them; right and wrong are but names readily transferable to this or that; I preach the gospel of pessimism and despair,"—let a man declare that, and the world would shrink from his leprous touch and dolorous voice. So the avowal is not made. The great names, inspiration, religion, immortality, heaven, are still used, but emptied of all their meaning, and speech is seasoned with religious phrases. It is but jugglers' work. Here is infidelity, pure and simple, and every man who embraces this ism ought to face this truth and declare to himself and the world: "For good or for evil I am an enemy of Christianity, an infidel."

In the third place, liberalism has failed, in that it has attempted to comprehend the Eternal. The finite has sought to comprehend the infinite. Canst thou by searching find out God? Liberalism has boastfully answered yes; has gone forth on its high quest. It has failed. How could it be otherwise? How can mortal plummet sound the depths of the divine nature? There has been an inevitable failure to comprehend God, and because of a failure of comprehension there has come the voice of

denial. Human reason, drunk with pride, would accept nothing it cannot understand. The Eternal cannot be understood: therefore is politely bowed out of the universe. The scientist touches mystery in the world of matter, and confesses it. The liberalist, too, recognizes mystery in this lower world, yet demands noonday light in the world of spirit. He does not find it; the clouds close in upon his vision, and in gathering darkness he mumbles an atheistic creed. But suppose it is not so bad as that; suppose that this boasted ism still leaves us God; it is a deity so emasculated, so impotent, that we cannot worship Him. If there is a God, He is an imprisoned God. He cannot help us. Prayer to Him is idiotic. God is the slave of His own laws. He is a figurehead, sailing with the ship, yet cannot steer it. He is always determined to foregone issues, and as incapable of cleansing the heart as of changing the weather. "We are imprisoned," said Strauss, "within a world of mechanism; impotent ourselves to control or direct the forces that in a moment may tear and mangle us; the huge hammers and the rolling wheels, the pulleys and the cords have got us in their power. We can do nothing for ourselves, and God cannot help us. In a little while the blind Moloch will rend us in pieces." Horrible! And yet this is that latter-day gospel at whose birth the bells in old Boston rang, and which

to New England dreamers seemed as a voice from heaven! Will the world follow such leadership as this? What is there to follow? No providence, no guiding eye, prayer an impertinence and an idiocy—what is left? Nothing. Liberalism, having gotten rid of all divine leadings in everyday life, after caricatures of providence, after pronouncing the prayers of all the saints—even the tender pleadings of the Son of God, as the flowerings of idiocy, after having scattered the petals of faith to the four corners of the earth, offers to us only an impotent and impersonal something as the great Eternal; and for worship, prayer being an impertinence and God's ear closed, a vacant stare into the great unknown. The Indian fakir lying on his back, contemplating a nameless part of his anatomy, is the Oriental liberalist, and stands for the class. Small thanks to those who would rob us of a sure and sweet approach to the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Liberalism has failed because it was founded on negation. It stood and stands to-day for denial. It denied the doctrine of the trinity, the atonement, future punishment, the inspiration of the Bible, the deity of Christ. Its creed was short and simple: I deny. So satisfactory seemed this creed that liberalism charged every sect with bigotry and ignorance that did not immediately adopt it. The sure proof of culture and wisdom was to substitute

I deny for I believe. No belief in particular characterized the movement. It was a jumble, a chaos. Liberalism scouted the Biblical teaching of the flood, and yet Noah's ark held not a more motley assemblage than this new sect. Never was there such an accommodating spirit. Transcendentalism, materialism, Confucianism, spiritualism, mesmerism, and whatever other ism anybody wanted found here a home. But the positive beliefs counted for little. Disbelief was foundational. Whoever had a grievance with any philosophic or religious sect found here an open door. Men were not fed on any positive convictions. The very highest was philosophic abstraction.

"There was a man who had a cow,
He had no hay to feed her;
So every day he used to say,
'Consider cow, consider.'"

But the cow didn't thrive under such a dietetic régime. Nor can man thrive on philosophic abstractions. The world craves both the personal and the positive. Negations are not satisfactory. Humanity feeds on belief, not on disbelief. There is nothing creative or inspirational in a vacuum. Liberalism is but the kick of the gun. Consequently it has failed. The world needs the positive and the constructive. Liberalism is anarchism. It destroys, but does not build up. "This is the way to the celestial city," cries the Christian. "'Tis

not," cries liberalism. Then show us the way. That liberalism does not attempt. All of a sudden it is modest. It has no organizing power. Men cannot be organized around a cipher. Convictions and not denials hold them together.

Another blunder is the arbitrary divorce that liberalism has brought about of creed and conduct. The beliefs of the liberal—if so be he has any at all—are passing, protean. Every day they change. In the name of hospitality to new truth, convictions supposed to be sacred are donned and doffed in a single hour. Everything is in a state of flux. What matters it though, says the elect coterie, these kaleidoscopic shiftings, these theologico-acrobatic tumbling feats? Beliefs count for nothing; creeds are nuisances; 'tis only conduct that tells. Conduct, revising Matthew Arnold's estimate, is four-fifths of life. No matter, is it, what you believe, but see to it that your conduct is becoming. But it is of some matter what you believe. God hath joined together creed and conduct, and no soul can with safety cut them asunder. Declare a man's beliefs, not his sham beliefs, not his professions, not the convictions that lay merely in the cold-storage chambers of the mind, but the real vital beliefs that filter down through apprehension to the heart, the conscience, and you have described his life. What the sap is to the tree, the breath to the body, the steam to the great throbbing engine

that sends the train of cars along iron tracks or the ship across the sea, is belief to conduct. Let all beliefs in the unseen and the spiritual die out under the tutorings of liberalism, and humanity is but a corpse. Make ready the dirge—the dark grave.

The world is not ready for such a death. Faith will survive, hope will still nurture its flowers, and their common enemy will pass away into the windowless gloom of the forgotten, the pathetic dust of the unwept.

Its end is destruction. Yes, you can pack it all in one word. The mission of liberalism is to destroy. It knows nothing of constructive work. It seeks to tear down, it dreams not of building up. It blows out the candle, it furnishes no torch. It topples over the statue, but the pedestal remains bare. It crushes the idol, it offers not another. It destroys. It devours. It is insatiable. All faiths, all hopes, all dreams, all loves, go into its capacious maw. It crushes all faith in God. At best He is an abstraction, an impersonal, unthinkable, mysterious somewhat, blend of moonbeam and shadow, creature of delusion and dream, dimly and thinly pervading all things; a tenuous ghosting whose throne is in the land of the mirage, to be worshiped only as space and time are worshiped, to be loved only as the light shaft or voice of wandering winds.

It destroys all belief in a rational purpose pervading the world, in a plan of the ages, in a universe intelligently ordered, and holds all to be chaos and unutterable confusion. It destroys the very foundations of right living. It holds that the conscience is but an earth product; that the only law of conduct is within; that every man is therefore a law unto himself; that we are all the creatures of circumstance, heredity and environment being supreme; that we are in the grip of blind fate; that evil is but a soft infirmity of the blood, a disease; that the sinner is to be pitied, not censured; that sin is good in the making (the devil a god in the embryo); that retribution is a hobgoblin; that we are unaided in our endeavors, prayer being an impertinence and a folly. Verily a poison creed, poison no less, though mixed with the blood of flowers. Chant the devil's creed to exquisite music, it is the devil's still. You are invited to an entertainment, the lights are turned down, and to the melody of sensuous sentences the angel within you is strangled and the beast enthroned. For this we denounce this religion. If it struck only at dogma we might hold our peace, but the hurt goes deeper. It strikes at the very heart of righteousness. To all the highest interests of society it is a foe. Toward it ours can be the attitude only of uncompromising hostility. In the name of the church this gospel would destroy; in the name of

the home, whose sanctities it would pollute; in the name of the state, whose foundations it would undermine; in the name of manhood, whose inspiration it would take away; in the name of youth, whose dreams it would sully; and in the name of the faith that gives us strength, and the mighty hopes that make us men—we pronounce this vaunted trumpeted ism of this latter-day accursed of God. From all its kith and kin "Good Lord, deliver us."

"Mormon despotism has its roots in the superstition of the people, and this Congress cannot legislate away. The people must be elevated and enlightened through the instrumentality of Christian education and the preaching of the gospel. This work is being done effectively by the various Christian denominations. It is *chiefly* to such agencies that we must look to break the Mormon power."

"Our Country," Dr. Strong, p. 120.

"Let him who thinks that the Mormon problem is almost solved be undeceived. Even when Congress and the courts shall have done their utmost, it will take half a century yet of the gospel in the hands of missionaries and teachers to dig up the roots of this evil. The public has not yet grasped the proportions of this problem. The present laws and Christian forces at work in Utah still have a problem before them, much like that which a single company of sappers and miners would have who should undertake to dig down the Wahsatch mountain range with pick and spade."

"Mormon Delusion," Montgomery's, p. 349.

XI

MORMONISM

For climacteric comicality Mormonism should be awarded the palm. Its romancing is refreshing in its very audaciousness. Jules Verne dreaming is here eclipsed. Baron Munchausen marvels seem commonplace. Of absurdities Pelions are piled upon Ossas, but the pile rises ever higher. Untruth was never more picturesque. From first to last the history of this cult is dramatic and spectacular. One feels that he has stumbled upon a scene in the Arabian Nights, rather than upon a sober chapter of a real religion.

Yet Mormonism is to be reckoned with. It takes itself seriously. Upon most transparent frauds it would yet build an enduring temple. It has the evangelistic spirit. Its emissaries are spread over all the world. They win converts; the religion grows. This ism is being felt in the councils of the nation, is adding gravity to our political problems, concerns, and deeply, every defender of our political institutions, as well as the lovers of our Lord.

Mormonism dates from the beginning of the second quarter of this century. Its founder was Joseph Smith, a man of rude force and infinite knavery.

Smith's delusions and hypocrisies were largely inherited. His parents were ignorant religious enthusiasts and fanatics, lived in a world of dreams and visions, prophesied that their boy Joseph should found a religion. Reared in such a heated atmosphere, listening to voices so irrational, it is small wonder that young Smith should follow his parents in their fanaticisms, and should feel called upon to justify their prophecies. Given to idling and dreaming, his life drifts uneventfully on until the maturing fraud secretly cherished was launched upon the world.

On the night of September 21, 1823, the angel Moroni, he declared, appeared to him three times, giving him an account of God's dealings with the ancient inhabitants of America, the place where the record of these dealings had been preserved, and a promise that he, Joseph Smith, Jr., was the chosen instrument of God for the accomplishment of mighty designs.

In 1827, in the hill Cumorah, near Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, Smith claims, under angelic guidance, to have exhumed the promised record, the wonderful Bible-to-be of Mormonism. The record was inscribed on golden plates, eight

inches long, seven inches wide, and about the thickness of ordinary tin. The hieroglyphics were in a language called the "Reformed Egyptian."

Concerning these characters, Professor Anthon, the noted Latinist, has this to say: "A very brief investigation convinced me that it was a mere hoax, and a very clumsy one, too. The characters were arranged in columns like the Chinese mode of writing, and presented the most singular medley I ever beheld. Greek, Hebrew, and all sorts of letters, more or less distorted, either through unskillfulness or from actual design, were intermingled with sundry delineations of half-moons, stars, and other natural objects, and the whole ended in a rude representation of the Mexican zodiac." Along with the plates were found two transparent stones, the Urim and Thummin, through which the meaning of these hieroglyphics was revealed to Smith. With their assistance he read off the message, the Book of Mormon, or Golden Bible, Oliver Cowdray serving as amanuensis.

This romance is buttressed by most solemn affirmations of the "three witnesses." "Be it known unto all nations, kindred, tongues, and peoples," so runs the testimony, "unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates. . . . And we declare that an angel of God came down

from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes that we beheld and saw the plates and the engravings thereon. . . . Amen.

"OLIVER COWDRAY,
"DAVID WHITMER,
"MARTIN HARRIS."

It is true that these witnesses afterward pronounced this testimony a fabrication, but let not the story be now marred by the introduction of such infelicitous truths.

In addition to the "three witnesses" is the testimony of the "eight."

"Be it known unto all nations, etc., and to all unto whom this work shall come"—such is the pompous introduction—"that Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold, and as many of leaves as the said Smith did translate we did handle with our hands; and we saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work. And this we bear record with words of soberness, for we have seen and hefted and know of a surety, and know that the said Smith has got the plates out of which we have spoken." The signatures follow. The bad English is probably the least offensive mark of this testimony.

The bible thus romantically introduced and vouched for is worthy of its fathering. It is a col-

lection of sixteen books, professing to have been written at various times by prophets of God. It is in the main the fancied history of the American aborigines, of wars between the Nephites (Christians) and the heathen Lamanites or red men. In these wars the Nephites seem to have been the losers. In the days of Nephi the Second a great earthquake announced the crucifixion of Jesus at Jerusalem, and three days later Christ appeared in the city of the Nephites, instructed them in the doctrines of His religion, and established there, as in Jerusalem, His church. The wars between the Lamanites and the Nephites continue, and in 384 A.D. the Christians fight their last battle on the hill Cumorah. They are defeated with a great slaughter, nearly three hundred thousand being slain. But their story is not to be forgotten. Moroni, one of the survivors, seals up the golden plates on which all this marvelous history has been written, buries them in the hill Cumorah, where, sixteen centuries later in the fullness of time, God, through an angel, reveals their hiding-place to Joseph Smith, Jr.

The real history of this fraud is commonplace and anti-climacteric. It has been shown beyond all cavil that the origin of the Book of Mormon was in this wise. One Solomon Spaulding, an erstwhile preacher, fell to writing romances. For these stories he could find no publisher. Among

the manuscripts was a story dealing most fancifully with the American aborigines, picturing these red men as the descendants of the lost tribes of Israel. The novel was to be entitled, "Manuscript Found."

This manuscript is covertly copied by Sidney Rigdon, who, in conjunction with Joseph Smith, Jr., springs this collaborated fraud upon the world as a "revelation" of God!

One would like to follow in the track of Carlyle's large charity, holding that the founder of no religion is altogether insincere, but such catholicity of desire is rudely snagged by such knavery as this. The mantle of charity cannot stretch so far. There is no place here for honest deception. Says Mr. Roberts, probably the leading present-day apostle of this faith, in "A New Witness for God": "It all occurred, and it is a solemn verity, or it is all a wicked fabrication. A fabrication it is possible for it to be, but it can never be resolved into a mere mistake—a self-deception. The men who affirm all of it to have taken place may have been villains bent on deceiving mankind, but they can never be classed as well-meaning or mistaken men. Either what Joseph Smith and his associates affirm is true, or they are base and conscious impostors."

It is very ungracious, maybe, but inevitable that

we should hang our belief upon the latter horn of this dilemma. Mormonism was conceived in fraud and born in hypocrisy.

But though false—monstrously false—this new gospel found its dupes. The world is easily humbugged. It is not hard to start a religion. Ancient and modern Athenians are ever itching for the new. And this revelation was “new.” In all the history of delusions and impositions it has no successful rival. It grew. It grows.

It is not the purpose of this essay to trace the history of this growth, to follow this strange religion from its nascent days through early struggles in Independence, Missouri, and Nauvoo, Illinois; its picturesque journeying to the Salted Sea far westward lying, and the upspringing there of a religious colony destined to be a State; its evolution of ritual and politics and doctrine in a half-century athrob with change and surprises—all this is well-thumbed history. It is a part of the romance of the nation. Enough to say that in swift development this new faith produces ceremonial, hierarchy and quickening tradition, and from Western Mecca sends forth its missionaries to evangelize the world; with what large success history has told us.

The concern of this paper is threefold: To point out in briefest way—

First, some of the peculiar doctrines of this religion.

212 Some Latter-Day Religions

Second, some of the causes contributing to its growth.

Third, our proper attitude toward it.

And to the first: Notable among the doctrines of this ism is its doctrine of God. Its teaching here is the climax of coarseness and materialism. It is the antipode of Christian science. Mrs. Eddy would depersonalize God; Mormonism would make God, as Matthew Arnold puts it, a "magnified man." Says Mr. Roberts: "There is no such thing as immaterial matter. All spirit is matter, but it is more fine and pure. . . . The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's; the Son, also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of spirit." The reason assigned for the last oracular deliverance as to the immateriality of the Holy Spirit is, "Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us." Shades of psychology! In the Book of Mormon (page 508) we read: "Jared's brother saw the finger of the Lord, and it was as the finger of a man like unto flesh and blood, and he said, 'I saw the finger of the Lord; I knew not that the Lord hath flesh and blood.' And the Lord said unto him, 'Behold, I am Jesus Christ, I am the Father and the Son, and ye are created in my image.' " Orson Pratt, high in the councils of the church, declares: "We worship a God who has both body and parts, who has mouth, eyes, and ears; who

speaks—" The grossness of the remainder of the sentence forbids quotation. In similar strain writes Joseph Smith: "God possesses both body and parts. He is in the form of man, and is in fact of the same species." After such anthropological deliverances the matter may rest.

The doctrine of baptism: In brief, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins. Even the patriarchs, we are informed, baptized for the remission of sins. In the Mormon translation of the Bible (Gen. viii. 11) we read: "And it came to pass that Noah continued his preaching unto the people, saying, "Hearken and give heed unto my words, believe, and repent of your sins and be baptized in the names of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, even as our own fathers did," etc. But though baptism is of such early origin and has been so universally practiced, yet many have nevertheless failed of this baptism, and as only through it is salvation possible, Mormonism, that all may be saved, has provided for a sort of proxy baptism which will be all-efficacious, a baptism into whose salvation through a substitute the dead may come. If a believer shall be baptized for an unbaptized departed soul, the merit of this act is credited to the shade. So important is this baptism for the dead that a specially appointed agent is to testify concerning it. In "Doctrine and Covenants" (the special revelation given to Joseph

Smith, Jr.) we read: "And again I give you a word in relation to the baptism for the dead; when any of you are baptized for your dead, let there be a recorder, and let him be eye-witness of your baptism, that it may be recorded in heaven." The reason for this is given in a subsequent section: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened and another book was opened," etc. Now, declares Joseph Smith, Jr., this "other book," out of which we are to be judged, is none other than the baptismal record kept by this register of baptism. It now appears how important the matter is. One can but feel a trifle nervous, though, at the thought of this record getting burned or lost. How jealously, indeed, should it be guarded!

The doctrine of polygamy: In the minds of the majority Mormonism is but the equivalent of polygamy. It is thought of first, last, and always as a system standing for a plurality of wives. That this should be so, that this most radical doctrine far-reaching in its practical effects, this transplanting of Oriental custom in the Occident, this return to the institution of primitive times, should have focused the attention of all is no matter of wonderment.

And yet polygamy was not at the beginning taught or practiced among the saints. On the contrary, it is called a crime. In "Doctrines and Cove-

nants" (section "Marriage") we read: "Inasmuch as this Church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication and polygamy, we declare that we believe that one man should have one wife, and one woman but one husband, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again." Subsequently, however, conveniently "special" revelations sanctioned this practice, and polygamy was immediately introduced among the faithful. Its ethic was most vigorously championed. The arguments most frequently used for its justification were (1) the practice of the patriarchs; (2) the sanction given it in the Old Testament; (3) the coming of monogamy through the Roman Catholic Church, whose priesthood is pronounced lewd; (4) the number of divorces among Christians; (5) the general corruption of the Gentile social system, the morals of Utah being declared superior to the morals of "enlightened, civilized, monogamic Christendom." Christian views of marriage are pronounced "unscriptural, ungodly, impolitic, tending to debase the human family, feeding the licentious cravings of the profligate, and exposing many of the fairer portions of the human race to shame and wretchedness."

Infinitely coarser and more degrading than this well-known doctrine is the Mormon teaching concerning the Christ. In the *Millennial Star* of November 26, 1853, we have this deliverance from

216 Some Latter-Day Religions

the head of the church: "One thing has remained a mystery in the kingdom up to this day. It is in regard to the character of the Son of God. Our God and Father in heaven has a body with parts the same as you and I have. His Son Jesus Christ has a body like His Father. . . . The question is often asked, who it was that begat the Son of the Virgin Mary. . . . I will tell you. Our Father in heaven begat all the spirits that ever were or will be upon the earth, and they were born spirits in the eternal world, afterward they became temporal. . . . When our father Adam came into the Garden of Eden he came into it with a *celestial body*, and brought Eve, *one of his celestial wives*, with him. He (Adam) helped to make and organize the world. He is our father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do. . . . When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father (who is Adam, 'the only God with whom we have to do') had begotten Him in His own likeness. He was *not* begotten by the Holy Ghost. . . . I could tell you much more about this, but were I to tell you, blasphemy would be nothing to it in the estimation of the superstitious and overrighteous mankind"! This revolting stuff is of a kind with the Mormon doctrine of celestial wives and sex relations in other worlds, into whose indelicacies and coarsenesses fortunately we need not enter.

Mormonism is closely linked with Christian science in its doctrine of healing. Like the disciples of Mrs. Eddy, Mormons point to miracles of healing as proof of their heaven-sent mission and substantiation of all their claims. From the beginning these professed cures bulk large in their literature and thought. And it is not to be questioned that at least in its earlier stages Mormon successes were due principally to the cures wrought or supposedly wrought by them. All manner of diseases were cured. Christian science health journals had their forerunner in the *Millennial Star*, and the "healer" should but turn the pages of this publication to see all his claims preëmpted by Mormon emissaries. Mormon literature overflows with these marvels. As one among thousands the following may be cited from Mr. Roberts: "After healing the sick in Montrose, all the company followed Joseph to the bank of the river, where he was going to take the boat to return home. While waiting for the boat a man from the West, who had seen that the sick and dying were healed, asked Joseph if he would not go to his house and heal two of his children who were very sick. They were twins, and three months old. Joseph told the man that he could not go, but that he would send some man to heal them. He told Elder Woodruff to go with the man and heal his children. At the same time he took from his pocket a silk bandanna handkerchief and

gave it to Brother Woodruff, telling him to wipe the faces of the children with it, and they should be healed. Elder Woodruff did as he was commanded, and the children were healed, and he keeps the handkerchief to this day." Scores and scores of instances equally remarkable can be found in Mormon literature.

It needs not the saying that the basic belief of Mormons is in the prophetic mission of Joseph Smith. His "revelations" have made Mormonism possible. One of Smith's biographers gives this account of his conversion: "Despair filled his heart. He was about to abandon himself to destruction, when at the moment of his greatest alarm, he saw a pillar of light exactly over his head above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon him. . . . As the light rested upon him, he saw within it two personages whose brightness and glory defy all description, and they stood above him in the air, and one of them, pointing to the other, said: 'Joseph, this is my beloved Son; hear Him.' " From such spectacular beginnings, with dramatic accompaniments, Joseph, Jr., goes through life, eventfully to the tragedy and glory of martyrdom, sent of God, as Mormons hold; quite otherwise sent, as truth must lead us to believe.

Such in briefest outline are the leading and peculiar doctrines of Mormonism. There has been

no attempt at refutation. There is no need. They carry with them their own refutation. Statement is condemnation.

Second—The causes of its growth. These lie not far beneath the surface. A primary and ever-operant agency is the world's itching for the novel. This prurient taste finds largest gratification in the gospel of Joseph Smith.

Mormonism has been forwarded by large-minded leaders. The men who have molded its fortunes, while seldom if ever men of culture, possessed unusual virility and force. They have been characterized by tactfulness, far-sightedness, political sagacity, administrative ability—men of power and resource. Brigham Young was in every way one of the most remarkable men of our day, and his was an executive ability and power to sway men rarely equaled. These Mormon leaders, sagacious, wary, shrewd, forceful, are not to be despised, and to their masterful leadership is the success of this religion to be largely ascribed.

Another cause is its magnificent ecclesiasticism. It is almost perfect in its articulation. Its only rival is the order of the Jesuits. No army was ever more thoroughly organized and disciplined, more ready to respond to one voice and will. It is true that it is despotic, but the sin of despotism is almost forgotten in the sight of its large results.

The "perpetual emigration fund," too, a fund

realized from the free gifts of Mormons, out of which the expense of the journey of converts from Old World districts to Western colony is to be borne, has proved a mighty agent in the upbuilding of Mormonism. In this way steadily are its ranks recruited. This golden gospel is hard to withstand. The prospect of a free journey from impoverished European homes to the fatness of Utah and the blue skies of a New World makes vastly easier the acceptance of the tenets of the faith. This is the eloquence that tells.

Its wonders of healing have advanced this gospel. Explain them as we may, and the explanation seems simple and unmistakable, these "cures," these claims to heal all diseases, have opened many an incredulous ear. Mormonism stripped of these miracles, would be as poor as Christian science robbed of its "demonstrations." Both alike have gained a foothold though their reputed power to heal the bodies of men.

Mormonism has also appealed to the world through its martyrdoms. The untamed violence of Gentile communities outraged by these Mormon doctrines has assisted in the spread of this delusion. The cry of persecution—always an effective cry, for the world loves best of all fair play—has been not seldom heard, and the blood of Mormons, even as the blood of saints, is the seed of a church.

These, in hurried sketch, are some of the lead-

ing causes of the growth of this strange religion. But one other question remains, the larger and more important one, and yet to be dismissed with a word: What should be our attitude toward this ism, and what should be done to meet its insidious political encroachments?

After even an outline consideration of its doctrines—untrue, coarse, immoral—the first part of the question is easily answered: that of uncompromising hostility. Other isms may be treated with tolerance; this blasphemy only as an enemy. Let it be war to the hilt and no quarter. This abortion is an enemy to our civilization. It is not to be temporized with. Let us do battle. Smite, smite, smite! The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.

But Mormonism is more than a religion; it is a political force to be reckoned with. In an address in Chicago in 1881, Rev. W. M. Barrow, D. D., said: "There is no doubt that Mormonism is becoming less and less a religious power, and more and more a political power. The first Mormon preachers were ignorant fanatics, but they were honest and their words carried a weight that sincerity always carries even in a bad cause. The preachers now have the raving of the sibyl, but lack the inspiration. Their talk sounds hollow; the ring of sincerity is gone. But their eyes are dazzled now with the vision of an earthly empire.

They have gone back to the old Jewish idea of a temporal kingdom, and they are endeavoring to set up such a kingdom in the valleys of Utah and Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico, Arizona and Nevada." Dr. Strong, in "Our Country," quotes Bishop Lunt as saying: "We look forward with perfect confidence to the day when we will hold the reins of the United States government." This may seem but an empty boast, but far-reaching and systematic schemes of colonization in the West when carried out will make the Mormon vote—a vote, never let it be forgotten, that can be cast as one man's—a prize for which great political parties will eagerly bid, and thus make possible the fulfillment of this prophecy. Let the people awake to the magnitude of this power. Eternal vigilance is the price of our liberty's preservation. Mormon schemes must be exposed, Mormon diplomacy counteracted by an outraged public sentiment, Mormon cunning met and mastered by the wisdom of a Christian statesmanship. If this power shall pit itself further against our institutions, let it be crushed into powder. Let Christian sentinels be ever alert, and, at slightest hint of Mormon encroachment sound the tocsin of war.

"A pseudo-science does not necessarily consist wholly of lies. It contains many truths and even valuable ones. The rottenest bank starts with a little specie. It puts out a thousand promises to pay on the strength of a single dollar, but the dollar is very commonly a good one."

"The Professor of the Breakfast Table," Holmes, p. 198.

"And if any are still tempted by the many seeming cures of Christian science to receive it as divine, let me remind them of the words of our Master Himself. 'Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity.' No works, however marvelous, can atone for the sin of denying the Son of God. Let us not forget the warning, 'Keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so-called, which some professing have erred concerning the faith.'"

**"Christian Science—Not Christian and not Science,"
Richardson, p. 12.**

XII

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

It was in 1866 that Mrs. Baker G. Eddy claims to have discovered "the first purely metaphysical system of healing since the days of the apostles."

Mrs. Eddy is not noted for the modesty of her claims. She pronounces our science false, our philosophies absurd, our churches "material, unspiritual, and unhelping," and boldly asserts that from this dominion of empiricism she is divinely commissioned to save the world. When she was only eight years of age, she tells us in her "Retrospection and Introspection," she heard heavenly voices calling her to her life work. This task was to give to the world "Christian Science." The chapter setting forth the genesis of the system is proudly headed "The Great Discovery." Since the revelations given to the public by Mr. Horatio W. Dresser and Miss Josephine Curtis Woodbury, these claims can but be regarded as romancings. For it comes out that Mrs. Eddy did not originate this "metaphysical system of healing" at all, but one Dr. Quimby, whose patient at one time Mrs. Eddy (then Mrs. Patterson) was, and from whom

she filched these peculiar doctrines, labeling them proudly after as her own and the result of direct inspiration. Prior to the time of the publication of "Science and Health," this lady was a dabbler in mesmerism and a believer in spiritualism, even practicing clairvoyance. This can be proven by living witnesses, associates of Mrs. Patterson in Portland and in Lynn. It certainly awakens skepticism at the outset of investigation to learn that the so-called founder of a system is wearing the laurel snatched from the brow of a dead man; that Mrs. Eddy, who styles herself "Mother Mary," is but a clumsy plagiarist.

From numerous letters in the "Mother's" own handwriting, from the unpublished writings of Dr. Quimby, from the testimony of hundreds of reliable witnesses, it is evident, beyond shadow of doubt, that Mrs. Baker G. Eddy is not the originator of the system with which her name is associated; and yet it is no less evident that Mrs. Eddy has prospered in her pseudo-apostolate. From the sale of her book, "Science and Health" (at three dollars a copy), which the author asserts all Christian scientists "require"; from the charge for a course of twelve primary lectures in the Massachusetts Metaphysical College (three hundred dollars), of which Mrs. Eddy was president; from the sale of souvenir spoons, in whose bowls is an etching of Mrs. Eddy's home, and from whose handle "the

prophetess" beams benignantly (five dollars for the gold-plated variety, three dollars for the silver), she has done well. It is nothing short of the comical in the light of this revelation of commercial shrewdness, knowing of her revenues, her palatial home, her retinue of servants and liveried secretaries, the splendid gifts thrust by admirers upon her—among them a coronet, set with diamonds—to read of her beratings of preachers for their "luxurious living," of "soft palms upturned to lordly salaries."

The exposition of this system which has proved so lucrative to Mrs. Eddy is in "Science and Health." This, the authoress informs us, contains the "whole of Christian Science." It is the Bible of "Scientists." "This book," says Mr. Wolcott, "is without a trace of literary art and is without a single redeeming grace of style to relieve the tedium of disjointed, inconsequential, dogmatic, and egotistical assertion and repetition. One may open the book at random and read in either direction without materially modifying the character of the argument or the sequence of ideas." The speech of the Duchess of "Alice in Wonderland" is suggested as a parallel in style. "Never imagine yourself not to be otherwise than what it might appear to others that what you were or might have been was not otherwise than what you had been would have appeared to them to be

otherwise." The student of this book is confounded by jumbled philosophies, Alexandrian allegorizings, words used in unheard of senses, strange twists of grammar, and convolutions of rhetoric. But let him not despair. Mrs. Eddy herself has warned him that her book will not be understood fully for several centuries yet. And this is through no fault of the authoress. The trouble is with the language medium! Her philosophy is spiritual; and "English," she informs us, "is inadequate to the expression of spiritual conceptions."

Through this imperfect medium Mrs. Eddy struggles to show forth her thoughts, and with much labor has succeeded in setting forth disjointedly, incoherently, a something she is pleased to call a system, a science, a religion.

In the outline of this system Mrs. Eddy's teachings will be considered as they relate to God, man, matter, the Bible, disease, sin.

Note first Mrs. Eddy's teachings as to God. His personality is flatly denied. Jesus spoke of Him as Father, but Christian Scientists know him as Reality, Life, the Saving Principle. The system is not theistic, but pantheistic. "We must begin by reckoning God as the only life, substance, and intelligence."

"God is all and in all. He includes me and is manifest in me."

Denying personality to God, it follows that per-

sonality is also denied to man. "The soul of man is God." "It is impossible for man to be a separate intelligence from his maker." Lacking personality, one is puzzled to know just what man is. He is not body, for the body is matter, and "matter is nought." He is not mind; there is but one mind—God. Man is at best only a *reflection* of mind. This doctrine certainly leaves man sufficiently attenuated and ghost-like for the most spiritual philosopher.

Christian Science tries one's patience in its doctrine of matter. "Matter is nought." Matter is a subjective state of mortal mind." Matter "is nothing beyond an image in mortal mind." "Matter and mortal body are the illusions of human belief." The testimony of the senses contradicting this philosophy is pronounced untrustworthy. "What we term the five physical senses are simply beliefs of mortal mind which affirm that life, substance, and intelligence are material instead of spiritual." "Divine science reverses the testimony of the material sense, and thus tears away the foundations of error."

It is, however, in her doctrine of disease that Mrs. Eddy claims absolute originality. She spurns the idea that the doctrine has been borrowed from any of her teachers. She is unwilling even to admit that she is indebted to the Bible for this great contribution. "Even the Scriptures," she affirms,

"give no direct interpretation of the scientific basis for demonstrating the spiritual principle of healing, until through 'Science and Health' it was unlocked." What, then, is disease, as interpreted by "Science and Health?" It is nought. There is no disease. There is no such reality as matter, matter being only "an illusion of mortal mind." If no such reality as matter, then no pain, no disease. Spirit is all. God is all. If all be God, and if God be all, then there is no sickness, no pain. In the "Christian Metaphysician" disease is driven out of the universe through a chart. Here it is:

DENIALS.

1. There is no evil power.
2. There is no reality in sin.
3. There is no reason for sickness.
4. There is no reality in death.

AFFIRMATIONS.

1. God is all.
2. God—Good—is Omnipresent.
3. God is Eternal Harmony.
4. God is Eternal Life.

Thus have you disposed of disease, and of much else besides, sin and death.

"Science and Health" deals with sin as with disease. The same reasoning is employed. God is all. God is health. God is holiness. Obviously, if God be all, and if God be holiness, there is no place left for sin. Thus again into the cloud-land of pantheism is sent another of the world's dread specters.

It could not but have occurred to Mrs. Eddy that all this was distinctly anti-Scriptural, and so she evades the difficulty by a so-called spiritual, Swedenborgian interpretation of the Bible, which gives us a new Bible indeed. Here is a representative bit of Christian Science interpretation in "Unity": "By looking deeply we shall be able to find John, the forerunner within; Zacharias and Elizabeth represent the will and the judgment, which, meeting under the ministry of the Holy Spirit, bring forth spiritual perception. Both the will and the judgment are 'barren' of spiritual results without the Holy Spirit. Thus the spiritual function discerns and heralds the Christ. As John was in the desert until his showing unto Israel, so intellect must dwell in the desert of silence before it can have any cognition of the spiritual Christ."

Through such charlatan allegorizing the Bible can be made to support the most colossal vagary that ever sprang from the human brain. It is not a question of what should be read out of "the Book," but what can be read into it. Here the romancer has largest opportunity.

Such, in brief and colorless outline, is this truly remarkable system, a system in many ways misleading and hurtful.

In our study it will be considered not under the heads already given, but as a philosophy, as a system of healing, as a religion.

And as to the first. In the light of what has gone before it seems not unfair to classify it as the most extravagant idealism, a doctrine held by none of the great metaphysicians of our day. Born centuries ago in the east, championed in later times by Berkeley, it had gone altogether to sleep when it was rudely awakened by Mrs. Eddy, tricked out with several other Oriental fantasies, and yoked to a system of metaphysical healing. It is but a revamp (and Mrs. Eddy being without scholarly equipment, a very awkward revamp) of an exploded, discredited system. But while in no sense new, it is pushed sometimes by Mrs. Eddy to most extreme and often comical conclusions. Her brief, in a word, is this: There is but one reality, God; there is no matter. The only realities are the divine mind and its ideas. Instead of possessing sentient matter, we have sensationless bodies. The five senses, as we have seen, are but the beliefs of mortal mind, and the first step in science is to learn their utter untrustworthiness. Matter is an illusion, sin is an illusion, sickness is an illusion, life itself is an illusion, man being "not subject to birth, growth, maturity, decay." "In 1866," says an enthusiastic disciple in the *Chicago Inter Ocean*, "Mrs. Eddy gave to the world the keynote of the philosophy of Christian Science in the statement: 'All causation is mind, and every effect a mental phenomenon.' 'All causation is mental.' " Now

let us bring these philosophical pellets to a practical test. "All causation is mental?" "The only things are ideas?" Then our war with Spain was a most prodigious mistake. Certainly one of the causes of the war was the deep-rooted belief in the American heart that the ill-fated Maine was blown up by a torpedo or mine explosion. But this supposition misses the mark, for if "all causation is mental," then the Maine was blown up not by a torpedo, not by a submarine mine, but by an idea! And if those two hundred brave sailors who went down to death in that ship had only been fortified in Mrs. Eddy's philosophy, had only known that "physical wounds exist only in the erroneous supposition that matter can feel," they would have neither suffered nor died.

This system suggests a new branch of national economics. If Christian Science shall ever prevail, there will be no need of surgical care for the wounded who can have no pain, of doctors for those who can never get sick, of coffins for those who can never die. Indeed, we shall not go forth to the battlefield at all. We shall remain in our homes, and kill our enemies with an idea. And if they fall, we shall not grieve, for they are but illusions, and we are but illusions, and the battle is but an illusion, and we do but dream that we dream.

Mrs. Eddy declares that there is no such thing as poverty. Her disciples, though they find the saying

hard, religiously follow suit. "But we know that poverty is a human belief, like any other disease, and that its only permanent cure is in the realization of its nothingness." And again: "There is no poverty, no non-success, no failure." Here is a short cut in economics. The curse of poverty is to be lifted, the millennium of Karl Marx and Bellamy ushered in. And the way is so simple. Not through tariff nor currency legislation; not through enlargements of foreign markets for our goods, nor increased production at home; not through income tax nor socialistic régime, but through Mrs. Eddy will deliverance come. Deny your poverty, and lo! poverty is no more. "There is no poverty." Christian Science not only delivers from poverty, but the very "thought of poverty." The housewife will no longer be troubled by the thought of "limited means," nor the man out of work as to his next month's rent. Even the homeless, hungry tramp has but to say, "There is no non-success, no poverty, no failure," and gone is the tragedy of life failure.

But we have not yet reached the limit. According to "Science and Health," there is no need to grow old, to die. "Growing thought will keep us young." Growing old is but an illusion. "This new system will make us younger at seventy than at seventeen." After all journeyings to dream Arcadias and to far-off ocean isles in search of the

fountain of youth, here it is breaking forth from the cobble-stones of staid old Boston town. Will you drink of the fountain? It has been whispered that this new system is becoming popular in "society." Is it because Vanity Fair hopes thus for salvation from wrinkles and the perishing of beauty?

To speak mildly, Mrs. Eddy's application of her dogma of the nothingness of matter is not a brilliant success. It is tameness to affirm that such a hodge-podge of philosophic crudities was never found before between the covers of one book.

If this philosophic crudity were all, the system would not be worth our investigation. It is something more—a system of healing. It cures, says its apostles. Here we have largest and most unblinking affirmations. Christian Science claims to have discovered the cure of all diseases, and marshals its testimonies in most confident way. Here are two specimen cases, given in "Harmony": "One evening I realized the omnipresence of spirits, and was healed of my catarrh. I made a note of it at the time, and have enjoyed a firm conviction of health since that hour."

Another: When this lady joined the class she was incumbered with superfluous flesh, and before the class closed her waistbands were fully eight inches too large, and the "last conversation we had with her she said, 'I am still growing lighter.'"

All manner of diseases Christian Scientists pro-

pose to heal. The claims of the healers are certainly remarkable. Here is an advertisement of a college of instruction: "Students are here instructed in the great mysteries of being 'hid since the foundation of the world.' "

Here is an advertisement of another healer: "Remember that we have developed the power of handling the universal life substance, and we pour it into your consciousness, and through it you are healed." This little man ought to be very careful how he handles this "universal life substance," lest he hurt somebody. It makes one shudder to think what a little carelessness might do.

But what is this wonderful secret? How does Christian Science cure? How can sickness be gotten rid of? By sanitation? No; sanitation is a fraud, declares "the prophetess." By cleanliness? No. By exercise? This, too, is worthless. The muscles of a blacksmith's arm, Mrs. Eddy informs us, are not developed by exercise, but by reason of the blacksmith's faith in muscle. "Then," says Dr. Richardson, most pertinently, "we must suppose that a blacksmith having no faith in muscle would have arms as weak and spindling after twenty years at the forge as when he began his apprenticeship." By proper food? "Simple food," says Mrs. Eddy, "does not make one well." Indeed this æsthetic Bostonian has little sympathy with the gross delusion that food can be of any help at all.

"Gustatory pleasure is a sensuous illusion, a phantom of mortal mind, diminishing as we better apprehend our spiritual existence and ascend the scale of life; food neither strengthens nor weakens the body." Is "Mother Mary" willing to put her philosophy to the test? Are any of her disciples ready to stand or fall by a practical test of the truth of this dogma? In truth not. Mrs. Eddy herself hastens to point out the unwisdom, with our "present understanding," of ceasing to eat. We must wait, she says, until we "get a clearer comprehension," etc.

Then, how shall sickness be relieved? By the denial of its reality. There is no reality, save spirit; spirit cannot be ill, therefore there is no such thing as pain. It is the old familiar circle.

Our authoress is even kind enough to descend into particulars in her explanation of the philosophy of cure. "You say a boil is painful, but that is impossible, for matter without mind is not painful. The boil simply manifests your belief in pain through inflammation and swelling; and you call this belief a boil." Still even a boil-belief is not altogether pleasant, and Mrs. Eddy hastens to the process of cure. Let us go with her. "Now, administer internally a high attenuation of truth on this subject, and it will soon cure the boil." Could anything be more simple? Given but a high attenuation of truth, and the boil is no more. Thus

would Mrs. Eddy remove all the ills to which mortal flesh is heir. It must be confessed, though, that she has never found a sufficiently high attenuation of truth to set a broken bone or perform any of the marvels of surgery. Sorrowfully is she driven to admit that in the present stage of the development of the science the surgeon is not to be dispensed with.

But the insanity of this system is seen not less in its denial of the reality of sickness itself than in its sneer at means hitherto used for its alleviation. All drugs are worthless. Mrs. Eddy speaks of a belief in drugs as "rubbish," of their utter "uselessness." If the sick recover by the use of drugs, "it is the law of a general belief, culminating in individual faith, that heals," and not the drug. "Arnica, quinine, and opium," says Marston, "could not produce the effects ascribed to them save by imputed virtue. Men think they will act thus on the physical system, consequently they do. The property of alcohol is to intoxicate; but if the common thought had endowed it with a nourishing quality, like milk, it would produce a similar effect."

Dr. Buckley's comment on this should be read by all: "According to the above, if it were generally believed that alcohol were unintoxicating, nourishing, and bland as milk, it would be an excellent article with which to nourish infants; and if, on the other hand, it were generally believed that milk

was intoxicating, all the influences of alcohol would be produced upon those who use it. If the public could only be induced to believe alcohol to be nourishing, the entire mammalian genus might be nursing their offspring upon alcohol with equally good results. No insane asylum can furnish a more transparent delusion." Idiots and infants, continues this keen critic, could not be influenced by their beliefs in the premises—they have none—and yet the effect of medicines upon them is capable of exact demonstration.

But the question remains, is it not true, despite these insanities, that sickness has yielded to Christian Science, that many have been cured by it? It is true. And so have many been cured by African fetiches, by Lourdes waters, by sacred relics, by Mormon elders, by quacks from the beginning. Yet we need not cry "miracle." Reflect, in the first place, upon the absolute worthlessness of other than skilled testimony in the matter of cure. Take any patent nostrum on the market, however worthless, and scores of reputable men and women can be found who will testify that to it they owe their lives.

Then, too, most sick people will get well with or without medicines. The majority of those who consult the healer will recover without help from any one. And yet if the healer but "treats" them, to Christian Science they will ascribe the miracle of cure.

Consider also how only the "cures" are trum-

peted. Failures are never published. Not less than a dozen cases have come under the writer's observation of those who, grasping at straws, have sent for "healers," and afterward have died; yet the public has never heard of these stories. Only "cures" are given wings.

But the above estimate would not be fair if it were not supplemented by the statement that Christian Science has been of service to the world in the emphasis it has put upon the mind's control of the body. There is need of a system of scientific mental therapeutics. It was no doubt referring to the contributions of Christian Scientists to this much-needed system that Professor James, of Harvard University, wrote: "Anything that interferes with the furnishing of such data will be a public calamity."

But Christian Science is more than a philosophy, more than a system of healing; it is a religion. Boldly it pits itself against the Church. Mrs. Eddy, with considerable heat, inveighs against the "materialism" of both pew and pulpit. Eddyism is to take the place of the Church. "Science and Health" is the Bible of the new sect. Are we ready for the exchange? Has Christian Science added anything to our knowledge of spiritual verities? What new truth has it brought into the world? What uncovering of old truths? What are its credentials?

Much, certainly, it contains that is good (though this good is not new), and much, too, that is positively hurtful, and to the race's undoing. Take its doctrine of God. We have seen that it is undisguised pantheism. God is all. God includes all, all appearances, all worlds, all that is misnamed matter. Then, if so, God is as much in a tiger cub as in a baby, in serpent's poison as in consecrated wafer, in sty of pig as in highest heaven. Then, if so, the moral quality of all actions is gone. If God include all, is equally in all, then he is as much in oath profane as in prayer, in pistol-shot of highwayman as in death of saint, in Judas treachery as in Christ death. Then, if so, prayer is a delusion and a cheat. "Prayer to a personal God is a hindrance." If God be all, why pray? If God be all, then I, who am a part of that all, am also God. And shall I pray to myself? Why pray to the God above me or the God within me? As well pray to the God in the puddle, the God in the clod, the God in the sting of the asp. Such bold, horrible pantheism we will have none of. There is no personality according to this teaching resident in either man or God.

Its doctrine of sin is misleading and hurtful. Sin is not a transgression of God's laws as the Scriptures declare, but simply an inverted thought—a delusion, an error of mortal mind.

Christian Scientists depart from the Bible in

their putting away of the ordinances of the Church given by divine appointment. The Lord's Supper is a "dead rite." Baptism is ignored. The commands of Jesus are too "unspiritual" for this body.

X Christian Science ultimately makes against sincerity. This is pointed out by Mr. Bates, in "Christian Science and Its Problems": "The Christian Scientist insists on constructing his own world. He rejects all science and all rational conclusions of the mind, and builds a little world within himself, according to his own arbitrary principles. He enters on a life of self-deception, which he inveterately maintains, a kind of mental aberration which should be impossible. He affirms that matter is nothing, although he employs it for food and clothing, and in all respects treats the external world as other men. Thus in the cultivation of mental delusions full of contradictions which can only ultimate in deterioration of the mind."

Christian Science dishonors Christ. It denies His incarnation. "The Virgin Mother conceived this idea of God, and gave to her ideal the name of Jesus." Christ, then, was but an idea, not a person. It denies His divinity. He was but a "god-like and glorified man"; but "the highest human concept of the perfect man"; but "a human, corporeal concept." It denies reality and efficacy to the suffering of Jesus. In "Science and Health" we read: "Jesus bore our sins in His body. He

knew the mortal error which constitutes the material body, and could destroy that error; but at the time of His death He had not conquered all the beliefs of the flesh or His sense of material life, nor had He risen to His final demonstration of spiritual power"—that is, Jesus of Nazareth, on cross of Calvary, had not risen to such exalted spiritual heights as Mrs. Baker Glover Eddy, of Boston!

And the cross was a mockery. Humanity, according to this priestess, has no ills of body or of mind. It needed no "Saviour." The tragedy of tragedies was but a dream fiasco, and Gethsemane's rocky knoll but the battle-ground of shadows.

Yet this latter-day cult dubs itself "Christian"! Alas and alas, what extravagancies, what impostures through all the ages shelter themselves behind this high name!

Pass can this delusion none too swiftly to that oblivion which is its doom.

"The new religion evoked to a degree before unexampled in the world an enthusiastic devotion to its corporate welfare, analogous to that which the patriot bears to his country."

"History of European Morals," Lecky, Vol. I, p. 409.

"It was religious zeal and the religious conscience which led to the founding of the New England colonies two centuries and a half ago. Religion has been a constantly active force in the American commonwealth ever since, not indeed strong enough to avert all moral and political evils, yet at the worst times inspiring a minority with a courage and ardor by which moral and political evils have been held at bay and in the long run overcome."

"The American Commonwealth," Bryce, Vol. II, p. 599.

"The Christian religion was at the outset actually and without any poetic exaggeration 'a proclamation of the universal brotherhood of man.' The noble system of ethics, the affection which the members bore to each other, the devotion of all to the corporate welfare, the dissolution of social and caste barriers of every kind and the presence everywhere of the feeling of actual brotherhood were the outward features of all the early Christian societies."

"Social Evolution," Kidd, p. 160.

XIII

SOCIALISM

What is socialism? The term was first used in connection with a certain scheme of social reconstruction advanced by Robert Owen of England, and is variously defined. Adolf Held: "We may define as socialistic every tendency which demands the subordination of the individual will to the community." Janet: "We call socialistic every doctrine which teaches that the state has a right to correct the inequalities of wealth which exist among men, and to legally establish the balance by taking from those who have too much, in order to give to those who have not enough."

Century Dictionary: "Any theory or system of social organization which would abolish, entirely or in part, the individual effort and competition on which modern society rests, and substitute coöperation, would introduce a more perfect and equal distribution of the products of labor, and would make land and capital as the instruments of production, the joint possession of the community."

James Russell Lowell: "Socialism means, or

246 Some Latter-Day Religions

wishes to mean, coöperation and community of interests, sympathy."

Mr. Rae's more elaborate definition is: "A state in which power and property shall be based on labor; where citizenship shall depend on a labor qualification instead of a qualification of birth or of property; where there shall be no citizen who enjoys without laboring, and no citizen who labors without enjoying; where every one who is able to work shall have employment, and every one who has wrought shall retain the whole produce of his labor; and where, accordingly, as the indispensable prerequisite of the whole scheme, the land of the country and all other instruments of production shall be made the joint property of the community, and the conduct of all industrial operations be placed under the direct administration of the state."

By far the most important phase of socialism, however, is that represented by Karl Marx, substantially the socialism of Germany, the most active, influential, and formidable of all socialistic types. Ignoring Marx's magnificent reasoning, we note simply the practical expression of his philosophy. He insists upon:

1. Expropriation of landed property and application of rent to state expenditure.
2. Abolition of inheritance.
3. Centralization of credit in the hands of the state by means of a national bank.

4. State ownership of all means of transportation.

5. Compulsory obligation of labor upon all equally, and establishment of industrial armies.

6. Compulsory and free education.

This is centralization gone to seed. Individualism is blotted out, and the government exercises a mandarin control over all.

Another prominent phase of socialism is the antipode of this—the Spanish or the Russian communal system. Here the commune is apotheosized, the state is nothing. Marx looks for deliverance through the state, this prays for deliverance from the state; Marx believes that through wise and much legislation the conditions of the working man may be improved, this expects relief only when church and state are destroyed.

These definitions represent varying types of socialistic thought, and yet give in a general way the tenets of this latter-day ism that bulks so large.

In this outline treatment theme no attempt is made to distinguish between these types. The term socialism will be used in its widest and most inclusive sense, stretching over things so far apart as the socialism of Marx and the anarchism of Kropotkin.

It is from the standpoint of the moralist and Christian this gospel will be viewed. If the definitions and expositions given above represented the

all of socialism this system would not be treated here; it would lie altogether within the domain of the political and the economic. But it means more than these quotations show, and is a present-day force to be reckoned with, not only in the shaping of politics and economics, but the reconstruction of religious thought. For so virile a thing as socialism is not content to be shut up all the day with the professors of political economy, and ranging broadly, would have to do with religion, its creeds, its forms, its life. Like the Latin, to nothing that concerns man is socialism a stranger, and religion as a factor in human life is not overlooked.

But on the whole, socialism comes not to Christianity with sympathy and friendliness; its attitude, broadly, is that of either uncompromising hostility or undisguised indifference.

This is not to say that all socialists are irreligious. Far from it. It will not be forgotten that the term, "Christian socialist," was introduced by a noble band of Christian reformers in England, led by such saints as Maurice and Kingsley. And Christian socialists there are to-day. There is a genuine Christian socialistic succession. In this succession are Herron, Lyman Abbott, Commons, Gladden, Clarke. These would bring to all industrial, social, governmental problems the mind of Christ, and so find for them solution. Dissenting

in most instances from the socialistic programme, theirs is the socialistic spirit, the socialistic aim. "Every Christian," says Professor Ely "who understands and earnestly accepts the teachings of his Master is at heart a socialist."

In the sense in which Maurice and Kingsley used the term this affirmation holds good. If, as in the vocabulary of these Christian socialists, socialism is altruism, all Christians are at heart socialists. Not all socialists, then, set themselves against Christianity.

But the bitter truth remains that aside from these Christian socialistic agitators, these earnest souls, and the number is not large, that are flaming out in most intense magazine propagandas, the rank and file of socialists are unfriendly to the Church, and would ignore if not uproot it.

Socialism may be as Proudhon declares it, "any aspiration toward the amelioration of society," but it is an amelioration sought other than through the Peasant of Galilee and the society He founded while upon earth. Such a deep-going statement should not lack authoritative buttressing, so we shall hear from the specialists.

Schaeffe: "The socialism of to-day is through and through irreligious and hostile to the Church."

Stephniak: "Absolute atheism is the sole inheritance that has been preserved intact by the new generation, and I need scarcely point out how

much advantage the modern revolutionary movement has derived from it."

Draper: "What is it that has given birth to the nihilist, the communist, the socialist? It is the total extinction of religious belief."

That most careful thinker, Mr. Rae, says: "The movement is before all revolutionary." While Kropotkin declares, in his "The Place of Anarchism in Scientific Evolution," that "there is no more room for doubt that religions are going; the nineteenth century has given them their death blow."

These claims need no explanation. They speak for themselves. There are no evasions and subterfuges. The movement is unmasked. Truly, as Mr. Rae says, it is "revolutionary." Nor has the Church escaped the shock of this revolutionary storm. The Church must go. Fuerbach's brother Friedrich, in his "Religion of the Future," voices the belief of current socialism when he declares that "Man alone is our God, our father, our judge, our redeemer, the Alpha and Omega of our political, moral, public, and domestic life and work." The Russian nihilist is no more anxious to get rid of the Czar than to get rid of the Czar's religion, and along with the cry, "Down with the state!" is the bitter cry, "Down with the altar!" The free man kneels neither to man nor God.

It is quite obvious, too, that not even such temperate and catholic socialists as Henry George and

Edward Bellamy have given any large place to religious motives in the working out of their proposed reforms. Their work has no background of the spiritual. The forces they would call into being are all earth-rooted. They look for a "new earth," but not for a "new heaven." Provision they make for man's physical and intellectual wants, but the world's soul-hunger is all ignored.

However unwelcome, then, we must receive the truth that present-day socialism is hostile to the Christian faith, and in the stead of the Christian ideal of a regenerated spiritual world it would substitute a material Utopia.

The reasons for this attitude of enmity are roughly the following:

Socialists, in the main, come from the ranks of the wage-workers. They are poor. Their lots are hard. They see others carrying off the prizes of life, while their own hands are empty. The world, they hear, grows larger, but their own horizons seem to be ever narrowing. The times are out of joint, and nobody seems trying to set them right. Now the Church is a part of the present order. It is associated with the system which the working-men have grown to hate. It is identified in their thought with the state, with law, with all the hateful order of existing things. Condemning this scheme as a whole, the Church is condemned. Revolting from the organized political and eco-

conomic conditions that obtain, they revolt also from the Church, which seems to be in sympathy with this existing order.

But the grievance is more sharply defined still. The wage-earner feels that he is falling behind in the race of life; that he is not getting his share in the world; that while the general wealth is increasing his individual wealth is not; that relatively he is even growing poorer; that the Church is the friend of the rich man—the rich man, who is his enemy—and therefore he will have nothing to do with this Church, which is not *his* friend, this Church which is the rich man's club. Thus he reasons, and the reasoning is the stronger and the bitterer and the more hurtful in its sequences because it is not altogether false.

Add, too, in making your diagnosis of the case, this: In these democratic days infidelity in all forms, through magazines and the cheapening of books, is reaching the laboring man, and in his savage moods he finds a sort of satisfaction in the mocking words of the apostles of unfaith.

However accurate these diagnoses, it is evident that socialism is ill, even nigh unto death through its unbelief. The deeper question remains: Is this attitude of hostility not grounded in unreason? Is socialism wise in its divorce from faith, or rather, is it not a terrible blunder, and from the purely humanitarian standpoint a stupendous mistake?

To the answer of this question let us address ourselves.

Socialism has blundered in confounding Christianity with churchianity. The one is heavenly, the other is of the earth; the one is fleckless in its beauty, the other marred by all man's passions; the one is the divine ideal, the other the fallible human realization of that ideal. To fail to separate these in thought is proof of greatest mental confusion. Let us frankly admit that the Church is open to criticism. It has not always regarded the poor. It has not always been indifferent to the gold ring on the man's finger and his station in life. It has not always shown that sublime disregard of rank and wealth that ever characterized its founder. It has not always been free from vanity, worldliness, pride. It has not always been what it ought to have been, nor is it now what it ought to be. Those within, those who love it best, confess as much. Amory Bradford says that the Church "misrepresents the Christ." Another says that formerly we "had apostles to the Gentiles, and now have apostles to the genteel." Professor J. R. Commons, in his "Social Reform and the Church," declares that the Church does not contain those who love their neighbors, but those who hire others to love them, or else leave it to the women.

Professor Herron, in his "Christian Society," speaking of the "moral apostasy" of the Church,

says: "The intrenchments of custodial religion have usually ended in being the citadels of organized falsehood, and have made the most stubborn resistance to the will of God manifested in the evolution of progress." Equally severe are the words of President E. B. Andrews, quoted by Mr. Crafts: "I am forced sometimes to fear that the Almighty may have in store a sweeping change in the agent of His saving work among men. To that which is called a Church He may be preparing to say, 'Weighed and found wanting; the Lord hath done with you.' " To temperate observers these criticisms will seem strained and unjust. They are not the utterances that these earnest gentlemen will care to stand by in their less heated moods. They could serve a purpose in the vehemence of an oration, but they do not bear the cool discrimination of type. The Church is not so weak nor so bad as painted. But if it were, and here is the heart of the contention, most foolish is it for socialists to reject those divine truths which alas! the Church has failed to grasp, to turn from a teacher because his pupils have not learned his lessons, to put out the sun because its light has been obscured by cloud. Christianity and churchianity may be together, or they may be a thousand leagues apart; to identify them is supremest folly. And yet socialists have made this colossal mistake, and because they think the Church *as it is* discrimi-

nates against the poor, turn from the temple of religion itself.

Socialists have blundered, also, in their failure to recognize that Christianity affords the only rational basis for their central doctrine, the brotherhood of man. That we be brothers is the gospel of socialism. Says Professor Ely: "Socialism is strong on its ethical side because it makes real the brotherhood of man." Mr. Ely contends that the present system does not make for brotherhood, and he quotes approvingly the words of Dr. Lute to Edith, in Bellamy's "Looking Backward": "It is the worst thing about any system which divides men or allows them to be divided into classes and castes that it weakens the sense of a common humanity."

This is all very well, but do not Maurice's fine words come to these reformers, that there can be no common brotherhood without a divine fatherhood; that before we can say "Our brother," we must first say "Our Father"; that unless we are kin, and through the words of Christ made to realize this kinship, seeing that we are all children of the Father, all words about brotherhood are as idle as the tinkle of bells, "signifying nothing"? This revelation made by the Nazarene of kinship through the Father is the only foundation of brotherhood; remove it, and your fine humanitarian temple comes tumbling down. If with many socialists we hold religion a fraud, if with Fuerbach we

256 Some Latter-Day Religions

declare that the only God is man, then this vaunted doctrine of brotherhood is either a flourish of rhetoric or a fool's dream. Well is Professor Ely's word chosen, "It *proposes* to make real the brotherhood of man." But it will never do what it proposes until it builds its temple of brotherhood on the foundation that was laid by Jesus of Nazareth, the Fatherhood of God.

Socialists must come to see how great the debt they owe the Church, how that from it they borrowed their ideal, and how only through its inspiration will the ideal be wrought into the real. For this doctrine of brotherhood is above all Christian. The concept never came to the Greeks or Romans. First did it find a voice in the Nazarene; first was it wrought out in community living in the Church of God. The noble words of Gregory Nazianzen come to us: "Rich and poor, strong and weak, servant and freeman, have only one head, from whom everything comes—Christ Jesus. What the members of the body are for each other, each among us is for his brothers and all for each."

If this high ideal has not always been realized, it must be admitted that the Church has at least kept it alive, and holds out to-day the only rational hope for its realization among men.

Socialism has erred in taking no account of the magnificent contribution of Christianity to the cause of the toiler through its ennobling of work.

When the Nazarene came into the world, toil was held to be dishonorable, fit only for menials and slaves. The patrician Roman or Greek would have held himself disgraced forever by stooping to toil. Labor was banned. But Christianity has changed all this. A new spirit has come upon the world. Says Mr. Loring Brace, in his "Gesta Christi": "The Christian religion continually raised the poor by elevating their sense of their own dignity—a sense which in all ages has worked against the degrading tendencies of poverty, and would therefore preserve a population from falling into slavery. Christ and the apostles taught by example and words the value and dignity of labor, and a cardinal doctrine of Christian morals was the importance of industry. The word "labor" became elevated in public esteem, and Christian working-men and women are praised in the epitaphs for being good workers. In fact, throughout the Roman empire a grand rehabilitation of labor began under Christianity which has never ceased. All the useless servants of the Roman empire, the parasite, the circus rider, the gladiator, the debauched actor, the representative of indecent amusements, the servant of idols, the low and obscene comedian and prostitute, were changed by the new faith into industrious producers and workers. Work became honored under the new religion. Christ was represented by the assailants of Christianity as being

born of a "working mother," and the Christian ecclesia became little fraternities of free laborers and competitors of the great slave estates." And this spirit obtains to-day. Work is now honored. "Work," says our noblest essayist—"work is worship." Laziness is the sin unpardonable. Work of hands, of brain, of heart—work is a religion. The present epic, as Carlyle contends, is the tools and the man. Through all literature run labor's praises, and in letters and in life the toiler is pedestaled in triumph. Let not the socialist forget the debt he here owes to Christianity, forget that his cause is given a voice to-day in the world's open parliament, that the world cares at all whether the toilers live or die only through the mediation and leavening influences of a gospel he is overquick to condemn. There are no "labor questions" in other than Christian lands. This very agitation is rooted in Christian sentiment.

Nor have the socialists been ready to listen to those great voices of the century, the voices that will carry farthest, the voices of their real and best friends. These ring out every one in behalf of faith. Says Kossuth: "If the doctrines of Christianity which are found in the New Testament could be applied to human society, the social problem could be got at." In the same strain writes Gladstone: "Talk about the questions of the day, there is but one question, and there is the gospel

that can and will correct anything needing correction." Mazzini's words are more vibrant still: "From every advance in religious belief we can point to a corresponding social advance in the history of humanity, while the only result you can show as a consequence of your doctrine of indifference in matters of religion is anarchy." Carlyle, a friend of the working-man if ever there were a friend, writes: "The beginning and end of what is the matter with us in these days is that we have forgotten God." Alas! that to such voices as these socialism should be deaf, to its sore undoing.

Socialism has erred in its over-emphasis of environment. Environment counts for much, but it is not everything, is not even the supreme thing in the development of character. The socialist contention that to reform certain classes you must first change their environment will not hold. Change the man, and he will change his environment. A man is greater than his surroundings. Mr. Spencer goes so far as to say that environment and heredity constitute the all of life's determining factors. But is it so? We frankly admit the power of environment. It is easier to be a saint in a Christian home than in the Whitechapel district. Hell's Half-Acre is not the ideal flowering-place for the graces. But further we cannot go. History abounds in the records of men who have risen superior to their surroundings by

the forces resident within. The springs of life are from within rather than from without. A new heart is of more importance than a new coat. To be brave in spirit is of greater consequence than to be full in purse.

Here all Utopian schemes have failed. Alike in the republic of Plato, the Utopia of Moore, the Phalanstery of Fourier, the new world of Owen and Bellamy, is the emphasis laid upon the outward rather than the inward.

The kingdom of God is always without rather than within you in these socialistic dreams. Their Utopia is as material as a Moslem paradise. Hence these schemes break down utterly when tried. The Christ was right; the socialist is wrong. The kingdom of heaven *is* within.

The seventh capital blunder noted is that socialism in its emphasis upon society in its collective capacity has clean lost the individual. Concerning itself with the state, it is mindless of the units composing that state. Its eyes fixed upon the social organism, see not the man at all. Mr. Saltus is right when, in his critique on the ethical teachings of Jesus, he says: "Jesus was not concerned with the state, indicating neither ideal nor practical courses for it to follow."

Primarily and directly Jesus did not concern Himself with the state, but the individuals composing it. He addressed the individual. He saw men

not as parts of a complicated social machine, but as living wholes; not as related to the state, but as related to God. This has been very clearly shown by Dr. Lyman Abbott in his "Evolution of Christianity": "It has been stated that Jesus Christ was the first socialist. This is certainly an incorrect if not an absolutely erroneous statement. It would be more nearly correct to say that He was the first individualist. The socialist assumes that the prolific cause of misery in the world is bad social organization. Christ assumed that the prolific cause of misery in the world is the individual wrong-doing."

The depravity of the individual, rather than the depravity of the social organization, is at the root of all world sorrows. Get the man right, and he will forthwith, to use a good old English word, *righten* his environment. Men cannot be saved in bundles. The world cannot be regenerated as a mass. The millennium will not come through any hatched-up schemes of social reconstruction. Only individual righteousness will make possible the coming down of the city of God.

Socialism has much for which it deserves only praise; it has also much to learn and much to undo.

ALDERMAN LIBRARY

The return of this book is due on the date indicated below

DUE	DUE
1856	
1858	
6-18-83	
2/18/90	

Usually books are lent out for two weeks, but there are exceptions and the borrower should note carefully the date stamped above. Fines are charged for over-due books at the rate of five cents a day; for reserved books there are special rates and regulations. Books must be presented at the desk if renewal is desired.

NX 000 527 258



